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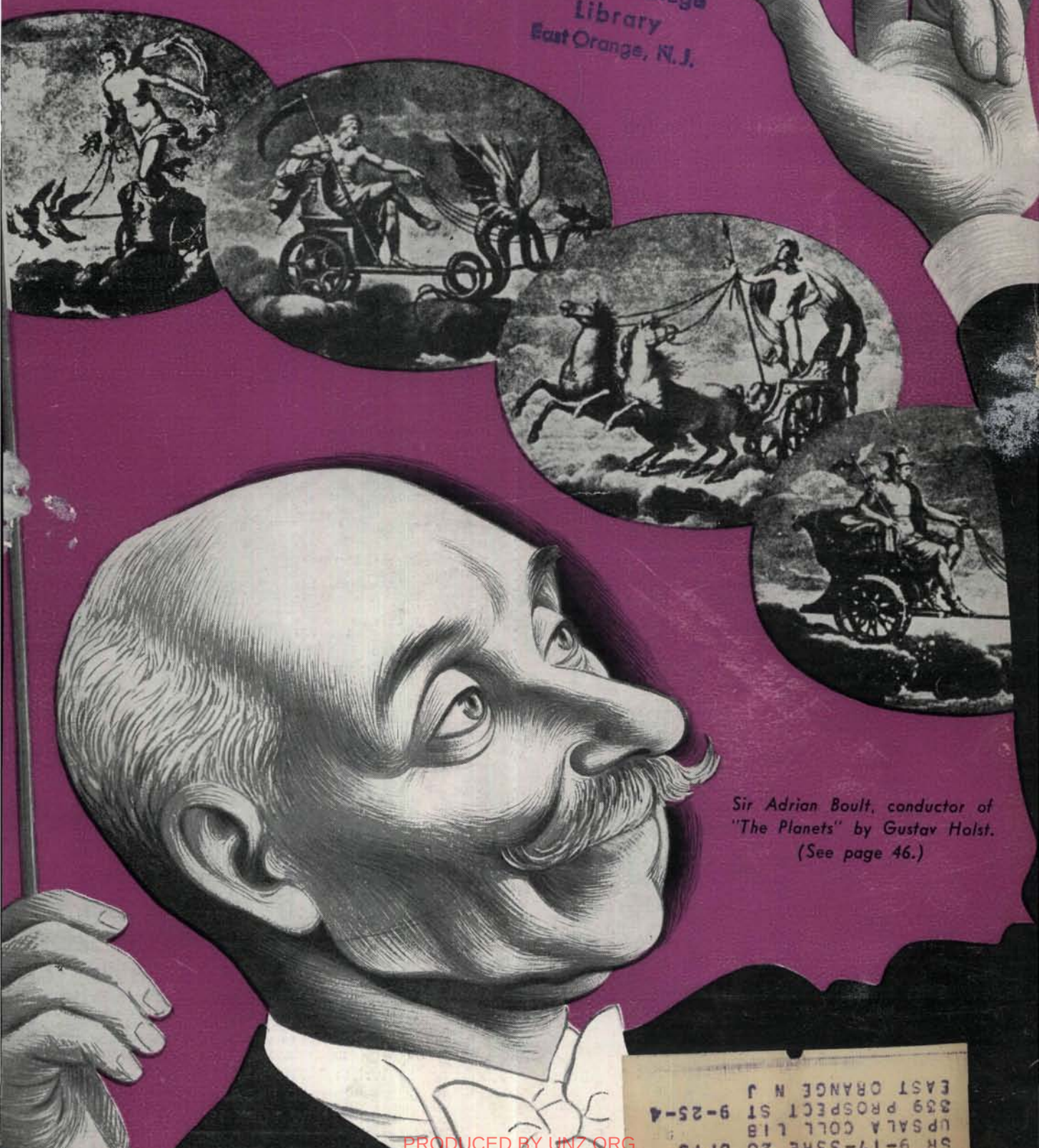

Sir Adrian Boult, conductor of "The Planets" by Gustav Holst. *(See page 46.)*

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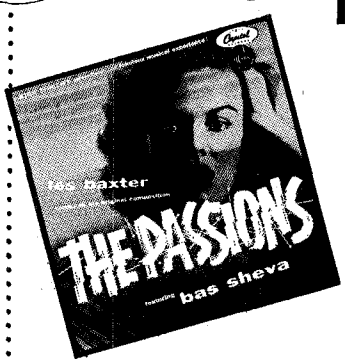

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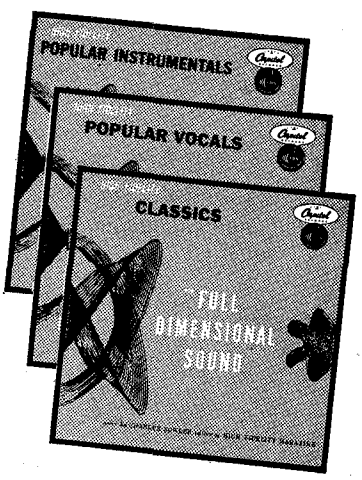

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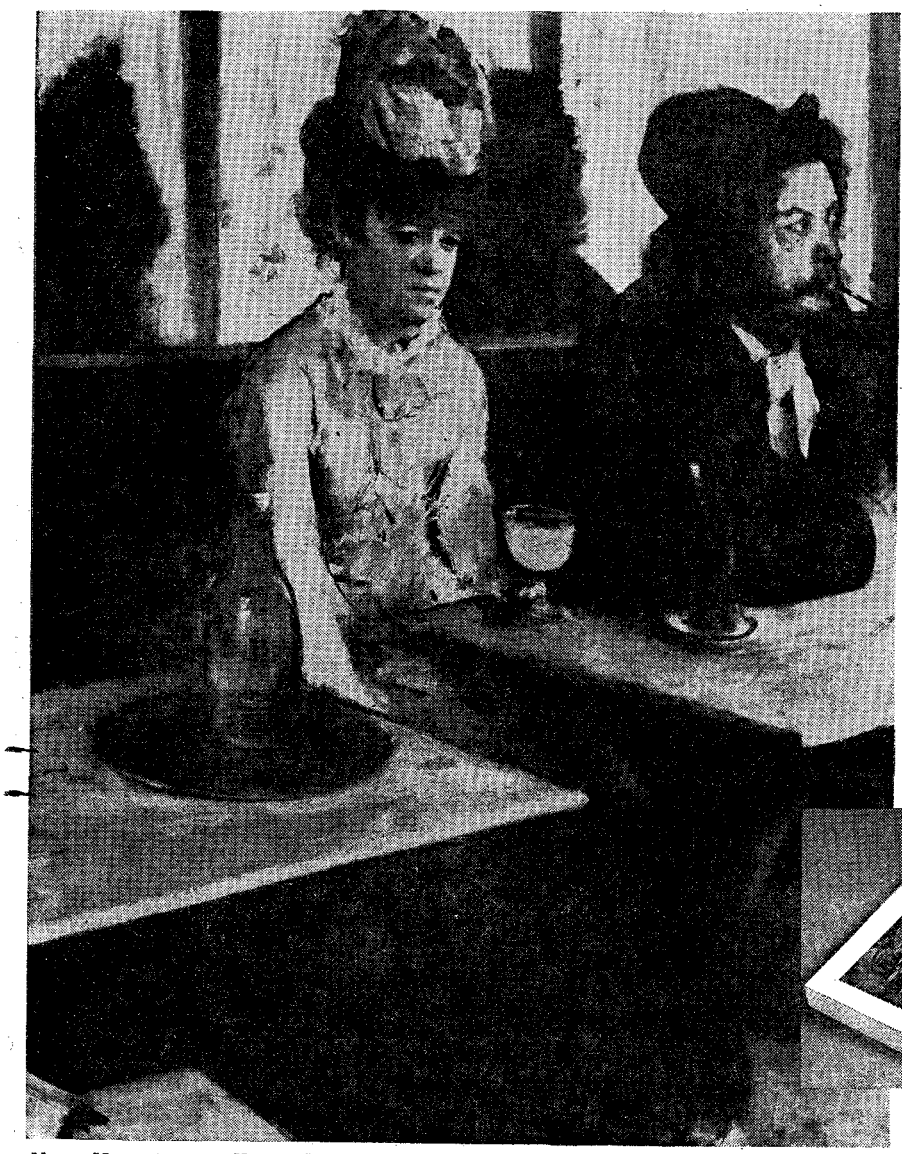

"A STUDY in human degradation, male and female"! This is how one outraged critic attacked the Degas masterpiece *Absinthe* when it was shown in London for the first time in 1893. And though a few artists and critics did leap to the defense, Victorian London was aghast at what it considered the utter depravity of an alcoholic debauch. Degas must have been surprised at such English vehemence, especially since the "depraved" models were friends of his, an actress and an artist whom he had posed on the terrace of a respectable and popular cafe in the Place Pigalle. But the damage was done and the owner of the painting, a Scottish collector, was so distressed by the public scandal that he hastily disposed of the treasure at a price which even in those days was a "give away."

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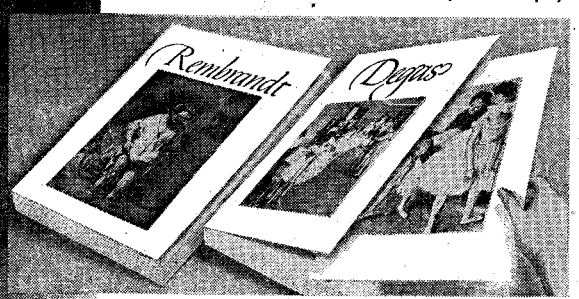

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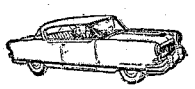

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The Saturday Review

JANUARY 30, 1954

Cover Drawing by Sam Norkin
(The medallions are reproductions of murals in the Vatican by Raphael. From top to bottom, they depict Venus, Saturn, Mars, and Mercury in their astrological significance illustrated by Gustav Holst in "The Planets.")

SR/IDEAS

9 POST-STALIN FERMENT IN SOVIET WRITING, by Vera Alexandrova
24 AN EXPERIMENT WORTH TRYING: An Editorial
37 A NEW TUNE IN SOVIET MUSIC, by Nicolas Slonimsky

SR/BOOKS

11 THE MAN WHO NEVER WAS, by Ewen Montagu
Reviewed by Kurt Singer
12 THE MEN IN THE TROJAN HORSE, by Kurt Singer
Reviewed by Merle Miller
12 UNDERSEA PATROL, by Commander Edward Young
Reviewed by Edward L. Beach
13 THE NEMESIS OF POWER, by John W. Wheeler-Bennett
Reviewed by Telford Taylor
15 THE SECOND TREE FROM THE CORNER, by E. B. White
Reviewed by Joseph Wood Krutch
16 JEAN ANOUILH, by Edward Owen Marsh
Reviewed by Maurice Valency
17 ALL DONE FROM MEMORY, by Osbert Lancaster
Reviewed by George Dangerfield
18 i: SIX NONLECTURES, by E. E. Cummings
Reviewed by Charles Norman
19 RAINBOW ON THE ROAD, by Esther Forbes
Reviewed by James Thomas Flexner
20 THE JOKER, by Jean Malaquais
Reviewed by Laurent LeSage
20 THE LITTLE STOCKADE, by Natalie Anderson Scott
Reviewed by James Kelly
21 FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT: THE ORDEAL, by Frank Friedel
Reviewed by John D. Hicks
22 HORACE GREELEY, by Glyndon G. Van Deusen
Reviewed by Roy F. Nichols
22 WOODROW WILSON AND THE PROGRESSIVE ERA, by Arthur S. Link
Reviewed by John M. Blum

SR/DEPARTMENTS

6 TRADE WINDS, by Bennett Cerf
10 LITERARY I.Q.
23 NEW EDITIONS, by Ben Ray Redman
25 LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
26 BROADWAY POSTSCRIPT, by Henry Hewes
28 TV AND RADIO, by Gilbert Seldes
30 MUSIC TO MY EARS, by Irving Kolodin
32 LITERARY CRYPT
35 KINGSLEY DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 1036
37 *SR* RECORDINGS FOR FEBRUARY

THE SATURDAY REVIEW, published weekly by the Saturday Review Associates, Inc., 25 W. 45th Street, New York 36, N. Y. E. De Golyer, Chairman of the Board; Harrison Smith, President; J. R. Cominsky, Executive Vice President and Treasurer; Norman Cousins, Vice President; Amy Loveman, Secretary; Nathan Cohn, Assistant Treasurer and Business Manager; Robert A. Burghardt, Advertising Director; Bert Garmise, Circulation Director; Ray Goodman, Circulation Manager. Subscription $7 a year; $8 in Canada. Member Audit Bureau of Circulations. Printed in U.S. Vol. XXXVII, No. 5, Jan. 30, 1954. Re-entered as second class matter January 11, 1952, at the Post Office in New York, N. Y., with additional entry at Philadelphia, Pa., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature." Entire issue copyright 1954 by Saturday Review Associates, Inc.

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SR's Library Poll

EACH WEEK *SR* asks a score of public libraries in large cities from coast to coast to report on the current favorites of their patrons. The twenty most popular books in this week's poll have all graced the lists frequently over the past few months, and some—in particular André Maurois's "Lélia," Alan Paton's "Too Late the Phalarope," and James Hilton's "Time and Time Again"—have placed high almost every week since last autumn.

TITLE AND AUTHOR

1. **Lélia**
   by André Maurois (G)*
2. **Lord Vanity**
   by Samuel Shellabarger (F)**
3. **Life Is Worth Living**
   by Fulton J. Sheen (G)
4. **The Power of Positive Thinking**
   by Norman Vincent Peale (G)
5. **From Here to Eternity**
   by James Jones (F)
6. **Too Late the Phalarope**
   by Alan Paton (F)
7. **The Secret Diary**
   of Harold L. Ickes (G)
8. **The Unconquered**
   by Ben Ames Williams (F)
9. **Beyond This Place**
   by A. J. Cronin (F)
10. **Flying Saucers from Outer Space**
    by D. E. Keyhoe (G)
11. **The Female**
    by Paul Wellman (F)
12. **Time and Time Again**
    by James Hilton (F)
13. **The Caine Mutiny**
    by Herman Wouk (F)
14. **The Voices of Silence**
    by André Malraux (G)
15. **Fire in the Ashes**
    by Theodore H. White (G)
16. **The Devil's Laughter**
    by Frank Yerby (F)
17. **The Spirit of St. Louis**
    by Charles A. Lindbergh (G)
18. **Battle Cry**
    by Leon Uris (F)
19. **A House Is Not a Home**
    by Polly Adler (G)
20. **A Man Called Peter**
    by Catherine Marshall (G)

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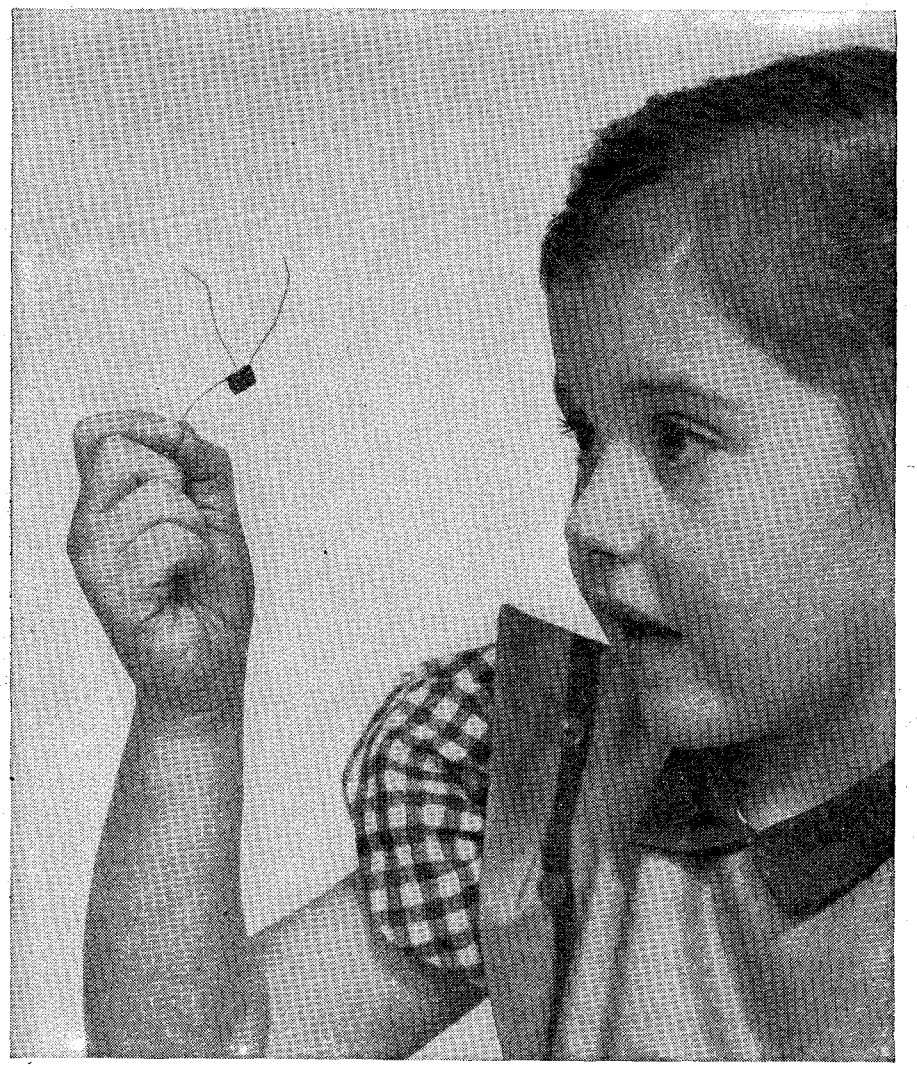
* (G)—General
** (F)—Fiction



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The Bell System, in accordance with its established policy of making all of its inventions available to others on reasonable terms, has licensed forty companies to make and sell transistors.

One of the first uses of the ***Transistor*** was in the new electronic equipment which enables telephone customers to dial Long Distance calls from coast-to-coast.

We can already see the time when it will bring many other improvements in both Local and Long Distance service.

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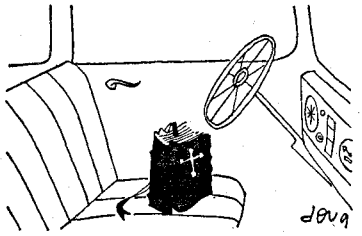
MR. BUMP LEARNS ABOUT LIFE

NEXT TO THE BUILDING that houses the organization of Anthony Bump, the midtown publisher, there is a small courtyard, parking privileges in which are restricted to Bump personnel and



priests from the church buildings across the way. The last time I dropped in to see Mr. Bump he was in high good humor. An interloper, just discovered, had been parking his jalopy a full year in the forbidden area through the simple expedient of leaving a Bible conspicuously in view on the front seat.

"There's a fellow," said Bump approvingly, "who used a little imagination." Then a frown crossed his face. "More than I can say for some of the precious editors around these diggings," he continued. "As I told them at the sales conference the other morning, thank God for the popcorn that's keeping us solvent these days!"

"Popcorn?" I echoed. "I don't get it."

Tony Bump had been fortunate enough, he explained, to be present at a very special luncheon in Hollywood that he never had forgotten.

The scene was the executive dining room at a major studio, and every important producer and director on the lot, not to mention a couple of big stockholders, happened to be on hand. All eyes were focused, however, on a visitor who seldom showed up in those parts. He was the man in charge of operating the thousand and more theatres of the combine, divorced now from studio operations by governmental decree, but still, unofficially, an important part of the family. He was an attractive fellow, furthermore, volatile, expansive, his speech flavored with a rich accent that you might have thought was Greek—unless, possibly, you were Greek yourself.

At the conclusion of the luncheon this theatre operator had risen suddenly to his feet, and without further ado launched into an impromptu peroration. "Gentlemen," he began, beaming at his audience, "I note that all the great geniuses of this outfit—all the famous brains—are right here at this table. It's a rare honor for me to be here with you, and I, just a fellow who runs a lot of theatres, appreciate it very much.

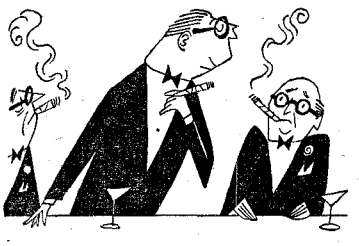
"Gentlemen, it might interest you to know that in the past nine months the popcorn concession in the houses we operate provided us with a net profit of three million dollars, which, by a strange coincidence, is exactly two million eight hundred thousand dollars more than was made for the company by all you blank blank geniuses put together. I thank you!"

With this the theatre operater, obviously pleased with himself, had resumed his seat, to the accompaniment of the raucous—and Mr. Bump noted—slightly forced laughter of his associates.

"And now I say it's popcorn that's holding up the book business, too," affirmed Tony Bump, warming to his subject. "By 'popcorn' I mean the good old standbys on the backlist, the inexpensive classics, the dictionaries, and how-to-do-it books. And let's not overlook the juveniles—those blessed, wonderful juveniles plus the five million extra kids in this country who are now old enough to read them."

"What's new about juveniles?" I asked. "Seems to me there always were plenty of them. Titles like 'Poopsie the Porpoise' and 'Gus the Gorilla.' . . ."

"Pah!" snorted Bump. "It's the flats at one third the price, and the colorful series of history and science at less than half that have driven the Poopsies and the gorillas into limbo. I heard an excellent, but unreconstructed diehard the other evening say he'd wait for these new kids' books to run their course and then go back to the sort of thing they



were reading before the war. Made me think of how the carriage manufacturers and horse dealers must have consoled themselves when the automobile first came along!"

I wasn't sure I liked all the implications of Tony Bump's discourse.

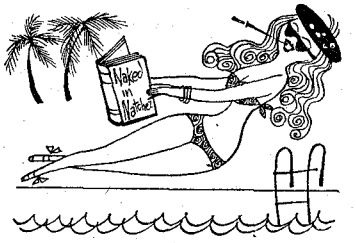
"But what about the really promising first novels and books of poetry that come your way?" I asked sternly. "You know perfectly well that if you intend to stay in the publishing business you're going to have to go on sponsoring the first novels, at least, regardless of what you lose on them. How else are you going to develop another Hemingway or Faulkner?"

"Of course, you're right," conceded Bump. "I've been known to exaggerate a wee bit now and then to hammer home a point. But it does burn me to have our editors not only talk us into book after book that represents a sure loss, but then howl when we don't throw away another couple of thousand apiece advertising the darn things!"

"There must be occasional first novels that net a profit, even under existing conditions," I persisted. "Break down and tell me of one."

I could tell by Tony Bump's dawning smile that I was about to hear one of his "wee exaggerations."

"Well, there was the case of 'Naked in Natchez' last year," he conceded. "Of course, we had a few special factors working in our favor. In the



first place, although nobody, including me, had the faintest idea what the author was talking about, a paperback house paid us sixty thousand dollars sight unseen for reprint rights on the strength of the title alone. I understand they've sold nineteen million copies in two weeks. Then, a very cooperative police captain in Woopdeboop Corners, Kansas, banned the book and burned it in the court square. Then Johnny Beecroft heard it was about the Civil War and chose it for seventeen Doubleday book clubs, three of which were so new that not even president Doug Black had heard of them yet. By this time the book was rolling so well that a chain out in Ohio bought five copies outright."

"You see," I said. "One winner like that pays for ten failures."

"There's more to the story," insisted Tony Bump, blandly waving a secretary with four newly arrived manuscripts in the direction of his partner's office. "I decided conditions were propitious for giving 'Naked in Natchez' the real works. I called Gordon, my alert advertising agent, who

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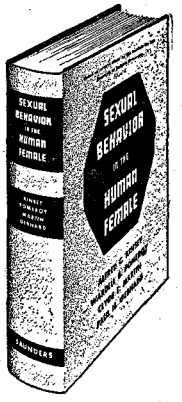

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was in Montana taking photographs, but showed up promptly two weeks later. 'Gordon,' I said, 'how much does a page in *Life* cost these days?' 'Something over $19,000,' he replied. 'Why?' 'I've decided on a full page for "Naked in Natchez,"' I announced. By the time Gordon had regained consciousness I had a fellow on the phone who knew Toots Shor, who knew a fellow who knew Marilyn Monroe and persuaded her to pose in a characteristic costume reading our book in a swimming pool. And Gordon came through with a honey of a headline and copy to match. True, we had to cut out the last two chapters of 'Naked in Natchez' to make it apply, and change the setting from Mississippi to the jungle in Africa, but, shucks, the coupons kept pouring in just the same. Next week we're running the ad in color! That costs about ten thousand extra. Gordon will be able to afford some photography in Tasmania on that one!"

"What a lovely story," I enthused. "I guess you've got one happy author on your hands anyhow."

"Not exactly," admitted Tony Bump. "He didn't like the color of our binding. Matter of fact, he's giving his next book to Putmillon's."

"Tony," I said wearily, "sometimes you let your imagination run away."

"Got to have a little excitement around here," he conceded. "I almost wish somebody'd bring around one of those hoaxes like they did to Whatcha-may-call-him."

"You know," I concluded, reaching for my hat. "This interview with you will be the last TRADE WINDS I'll be doing until the May 8 issue. I've got a little project of my own I want to finish. A group of distinguished pinch-hitters will bat out the column while I'm away this time. Sure you haven't a final word to pass on to the customers?"

"They'll know I was clowning a bit on 'Naked in Natchez'," grinned Tony. "But I hope they'll realize that as far as that popcorn routine is concerned I never was more serious in my life!"

As I left I heard a sudden commotion in Anthony Bump's inner sanctum. "It's nothing at all," the pretty receptionist assured me. "Just Mr. Bump and that confounded pipe of his. He's dropped another lighted match in his trash basket and set the office on fire again."

—BENNETT CERF.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *With this issue Bennett Cerf takes a three-month leave of absence in order to work on "An Encyclopedia of American Humor" for Doubleday. Meanwhile* TRADE WINDS *will be conducted by guest columnists.*

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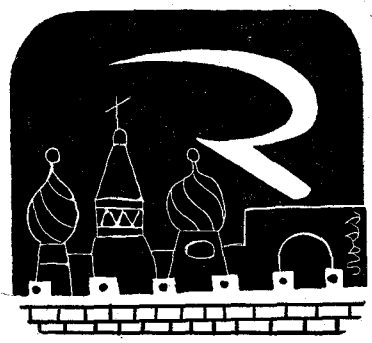
The Saturday Review
JANUARY 30, 1954



POST-STALIN FERMENT IN SOVIET WRITING

By VERA ALEXANDROVA

Two years ago Vera Alexandrova reported in these pages [SR *March 8, 1952*] *that Soviet writers were still obliged to express independent ideas only by innuendo. Today, almost a year after Stalin's death, she appraises the changing and uncertain literary climate in the USSR. Mrs. Alexandrova, who describes post-Stalin literary trends here, is editor-in-chief of the Chekhov Publishing House, established three years ago by the Ford Foundation's East European Fund. An analysis of similar trends in Soviet music will be found in the article by Nicolas Slonimsky on page 37 of this issue.*

THE first post-Stalin year in Soviet literature was filled with the expectation of some sort of change, an expectation which found expression not so much in creative literature as in the articles and public statements of Soviet writers and poets. Its intensity reminds one of the first year after the war, when, however, the longing for change and for "plain talk" was suddenly stifled by a literary "purge." This need for "plain talk" was recently given its clearest statement in an essay by Ilya Ehrenburg, "On the Work of a Writer," published in *Znamya* [*The Banner*], October 1953. However, Ehrenburg's article was preceded—and, as it were, the way prepared—by a great many comments by other writers and critics.

As early as last spring the Leningrad poet Olga Berggolts shared with the reader her impressions of the state of Soviet lyric poetry ("A Discussion of Lyric Poetry," *Literaturnaya Gazeta* [*Literary Gazette*], April 16, 1953). In company with a group of other poets, she had appeared at a literary gathering in Leningrad. When the poets had finished reading their verse requests suddenly burst forth from the audience: "Please read something lyrical!" "Just imagine that!" thought Berggolts. "Evidently, what we just read—and we did read verses dealing with the vital life concerns of our listeners—is not even regarded as lyric poetry by the reader!"

Returning home, Berggolts looked through four literary magazines for the past year and "did not find a single lyric poem on love." The poverty of Soviet lyric poetry, in her opinion, stems from the fact that "in a great many of our lyrical works the most important thing is lacking: humanity, the human being. That is, the human being is there and so are even the people of various professions: bulldozer and steam-shovel operators and horticulturists are described, often described well and even masterfully, but they are described externally, and the most important thing is lacking in the poetry—a lyric hero, with an individual relationship to events, to the landscape." However, "the image of man in lyric poetry is above all that of the poet himself. The more frankly and fully he reveals himself the more quickly he succeeds in drawing the reader to himself, in making him his 'partner'."

"The great educative power of lyric poetry," Berggolts concludes, "consists in the fact that the reader not merely wants to emulate the hero, to be 'like the hero,' but actually becomes him." She attributes much of the blame for the coldness of postwar lyric poetry to those critics who raised a hue and cry "over the pessimism and decadence" of poets every time they found the latter's verse expressing "irresolution or, God forbid, the poet's sorrow at, let us say, parting with his beloved." According to the unwritten laws of Soviet lyric poetry, this sorrow must immediately be "counterbalanced by some other, happier event—by, let us say, the jilted lover's overfulfilment of the hay-collection plan." "It is painful," Berggolts concludes, "to note how the main efforts of even talented poets are devoted to observing this balance in lyric verse."

During the past summer the popular peasant poet Alexander Tvardovski made a talented and—most important—a bold defense of frank-

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ness in art and criticism. His new poem "Distance Behind Distance" was published in abridged form in the June issue of *Novyi Mir* (*New World*). The poem was conceived and obviously begun during a mission to the Far East in 1950. Distant railway journeys are invested, both in pre-Revolutionary Russian and in Soviet literature, with a special quality of romance. Torn from their customary life routine, people who only yesterday were strangers quickly become friends and pass the time in conversation characterized by an unusual degree of intimacy and frankness. Tvardovski became acquainted with his traveling companions and found out their professions and what their interests were. In his turn, the poet did not succeed for long in preserving his incognito. Having discovered that a famous writer was riding with them, the other passengers gave him a "going-over." The poet had to answer not only for his own shortcomings but for the sins of contemporary Soviet literature as a whole. The passengers criticized writers for "not reflecting life." Often writers acquaint themselves with contemporary life during so-called "creative missions." The writer visits a construction project, "breathes a little dust," "pokes a stick in the concrete," and goes home to dash off a novel. Everything in the book is seemingly as he saw it, "and yet as a whole it is so inedible that it makes one want to cry aloud."

Listening to this "impartial criticism," Tvardovski is chagrined; at the same time, he admits that this reproof, spiced at times "with a coarse joke," is far more agreeable to him than the "cold fog of lies" with which he is usually regaled by his colleagues. Therefore he acknowledges his own and others' sins. But then he is suddenly interrupted by the voice of a passenger in the upper berth. This passenger is the composite image of an editor, the product of the poet's imagination, and the further conversation between him and the poet is fictitious. Nevertheless, this conversation is very significant. The "editor" admits that he had wanted to enter Tvardovski's discussion with the passengers earlier, but he had found it "entertaining" to observe the poet when he imagined himself free of his editorial tutelage. It was "entertaining" for the editor to watch how the poet suddenly became "incredibly fervent" and "bold." Tvardovski vehemently protests against his editor, but the latter explains in an insinuating voice that he is, after all, a special kind of editor; he is created by the fear of the poet himself. That is why it is so easy for him, as an editor, to correct the poet:

All my work
You carry out for me.
. . . . . .
And I am satisfied with you
And like you very much, believe me.
I prefer you to all others.
I cite you as an example: Here is a poet
Whom I simply do not read,
For I need have no fear.

Tvardovski does not give in—"only when I am weak and dispirited are you able to creep up upon me," "you are not real, but only a bad dream"—and the fictitious conversation ends on a cheerful note:

Meanwhile, the passengers,
Filling the corridor like a hall,
Stood and listened excitedly
To all of this heated discussion. . . .

A great many theatrical people—actors and directors—have also taken part in the discussion of frankness in art during the past year. An example is the article "More Boldness" (*Literaturnaya Gazeta*, August 25, 1953) by the actor Ruben Simonov, which takes up the reasons for the failure of recent stage productions. Among other things, Simonov writes: "When I reflect on why, of late, a chill has often seemed to hang like an invisible curtain between the stage and the audience, I am inclined to blame not only the playwrights but the actors and directors as well." And he goes on to give a vivid description of a Soviet stage performance: "The theatre fills up, the audience take their seats, programs rustle; then the lights dim and the ensuing quiet is broken by the first lines of the play. And suddenly, sometimes after no more than the first few lines, a whisper runs through the theatre.

"Do not imagine that this is the emotional response which the actors find so desirable and the playwright so flattering. Not at all! It is simply members of the audience in different parts of the theatre guessing simultaneously what is to happen next and hastening to share their guesses. The satisfaction they receive when their surmises start to come true . . . will not afford them esthetic pleasure. It resembles more the pleasure a person experiences in solving an easy crossword puzzle."

THE crisis gripping the contemporary Soviet theatre can be overcome only by bold directors and bold actors. "It goes without saying," Simonov adds, "that this boldness of the director and actors for which we have all been pining can emerge only out of vivid, bold plays." The author does not, of course, go on to say why

(*Continued on page* 31)

Your Literary I. Q.

Conducted by John T. Winterich

MORE TOUSLED TITLES

Fannie Gross of Asheville, North Carolina, offers twenty anagrammed titles under each of which collections of short stories and sketches by one writer have been published, along with their disarranged authors. Allowing five points for each title and author you can disentangle, a score of sixty is par, seventy is neat, and eighty or better more or less superb. Answers on page 31.

1. "Brat Uses a Snub Hint"	Lester L. Drunbars
2. "As Man Risks a Greeting"	Pandurah Redemui
3. "Fadgy Fahns"	Homer Thisle Cropyr
4. "A. V. Racna"	Holjawg Shontry
5. "Houb Swore in G.I."	Hownd Drose Eroans
6. "Murtin of Hileol"	R. H. Noye
7. "After Many Bells Came Morgon Hour"	Chapele Scotenk
8. "Toes Cleave Things"	Sadie Kinnes
9. "Je Suis T. T. Rosso"	Prungir Lakiddy
10. "Tune Gem Hutch Foot"	Lichon Lojer
11. "Grim Men Do Honor Taft"	Molto Shafew
12. "Caputal Refreshes Us"	Rhoda Trepokyr
13. "Sir Sorel Told"	Zanee Chaborold
14. "Hurray! Castle Tree"	Skelorc Shajanc
15. "Glib Ten from Hale Fate"	Thomas M. Ragemuse
16. "Marne Coed"	Conogo Canac Bivici
17. "Veteran W. I. Leigh"	Learlenc Klidews
18. "Hethier Tenets"	Lewalin Klafumir
19. "Heed Yon Cheep Tea"	Hantral Helgorm
20. "Rubid Lens"	Maco J. Sejey

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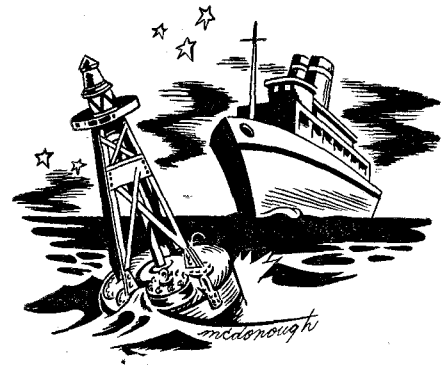
A Deadly Dead Englishman



"The Man Who Never Was," by Ewen Montagu *(J. B. Lippincott. 160 pp. $2.75), offers an account of World War II's most carefully planned spy strategy, which was executed with intelligence and imagination by the British Military Intelligence Department. Kurt Singer, our reviewer, is the author of twenty books on espionage throughout the world.*

By Kurt Singer

TO CONFUSE, to mystify, to misinform, and to fool an enemy have always been main objectives in the stratagem of global espionage. Here, in one of the greatest spy stories of the last war, is the recipe the British Intelligence served up to outwit the Axis partners:

Take an anonymous corpse, give it the identity of a supposed major of the Royal British Marines bearing spurious top secret messages in code, cast the body from a submarine into the rough sea so it will float to the Spanish shore and be picked up. The Spaniards will sell the false messages to German agents. Eventually this planted information reaches the German High Command and leads to the changing of its entire Mediterranean defense plan.

Ewen Montagu was the father of this idea which Hollywood probably would have rejected as much too fantastic for a picture. He has told the story in a fascinating book, "The Man Who Never Was." My only wonder is why we in the United States had to wait almost eleven years to get an account of Operation Mincemeat. (Some account of it was given in several volumes published over the past few years in England and Germany.)

It was during 1943 when Winston Churchill, fearing heavy losses might result from an invasion of Sicily, said: "Anybody but a damn fool would know it is Sicily we will strike next." It is here where Operation Mincemeat begins. The Allies had to think up a scheme to keep losses down, to fool the enemy through commando raids and guerrilla actions, in the hope they would think we would strike elsewhere than Sicily.

Both Churchill and Eisenhower conferred on this matter and as a result Ewen Montagu, a British Naval Intelligence officer, came up with the idea of how to confuse Hitler and Mussolini successfully. "Why Sicily? There were other possible points of invasion. What about Sardinia, Corsica, Crete, Yugoslavia, Greece, Northern France, Southern France?"

Ewen Montagu received *plain pouvoir.* He and a colleague, who must not be identified even now, conceived the daring idea of taking a body and disguising it as a staff officer. He was to carry high level papers which would show clearly that Churchill and Eisenhower had decided, at the last minute, to bypass Sicily and invade somewhere on the Mediterranean.

Montagu needed medical advice first. What kind of body would he have to use to pass enemy inspection and autopsy? He was told to use a pneumonia case with water in the lungs. Then he learned how the body could be preserved on dry ice in a specially built tank put aboard a submarine.

The book gives a detailed account of the whole plan, starting from the visit in the London morgue where the body was picked. "He does not have to look like an officer—only like a staff officer."

Even today only a few people know the real name of this corpse who became "Major William Martin" and was dropped from H. M. submarine *Seraph* near the Spanish town of Huelva. In Huelva the British M.I. 5 knew the Germans had a most active secret service center. Mr. Montagu was on board the *Seraph* when the dead man was thrown overboard. The *Seraph,* by the way, was the same ship that had rescued General Giraud and brought General Mark Clark secretly to North Africa for pre-invasion reconnaissance.

THE documents put into the pockets of the dead man included letters written by General Alexander and a letter personally written by Lord Louis Mountbatten addressed to General Dwight D. Eisenhower. All the documents planted on the dead courier indicated that the Allies would bypass Sicily, take Sardinia first and then Corsica, thus opening the whole coast of Italy and Southern France to attack. The document gave false dates, false strategy to lead Hitler to defend every part of the Mediterranean except the landing beaches of Sicily picked by the Allies.

Major Bill Martin, the man who never was, did a most convincing job. The papers on him were in code, but as the Allies had used a broken code the enemy agents easily decoded the messages. When Hitler personally asked for evidence that this dead courier was real, and not a plant, the German agent had plenty of it to produce for him.

They knew that Major Martin carried thirty-one different small items on him; he was dressed like a courier; he looked like one. He must have been on a ship torpedoed off North Africa. The autopsy, too, was in his favor. He also had snapshots of his fiancee, Pam, and love letters from her. He had an unpaid bill for the engagement ring in his pocket and a letter from his father. Lloyds Bank had written him about an overdraft of £79. He had Navy identification papers, a St. Christopher medal, and the Silver Cross. That this man was what he seemed to be was the decision of the Nazi Secret Service.

Hitler and Mussolini were convinced by the evidence. It was a great catch that proved the information from Turkey given by the agent Daniello (of "Five Fingers" and Operation Cicero fame) must be false. Even Admiral Doenitz was convinced by the planted evidence. As a result, the High Command moved troops from Sicily to Sardinia and Corsica and Southern France. When the Allies finally landed in Sicily their losses were far less than originally anticipated.

This is a moving and true spy story told by a writer with touches of the Eric Ambler skill. It is, perhaps, the best book of its kind to come out of the war. It is also wonderfully refreshing to read of real professional spy masters and spy catchers because they act so totally different from the self-styled brand and the amateur investigators we have met so often in fiction during the past years.

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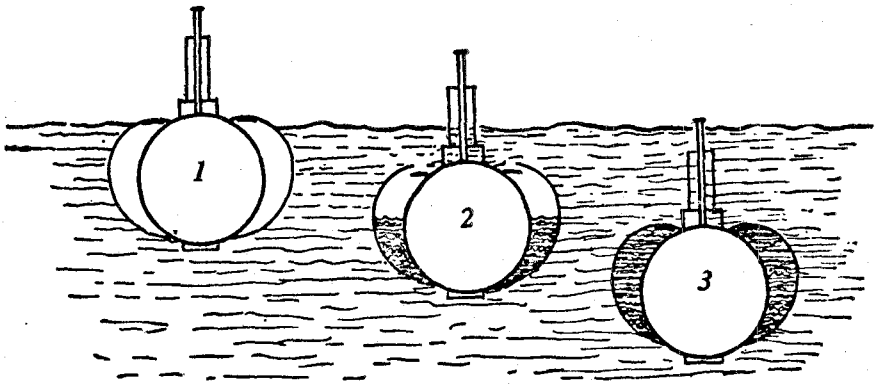

—*From "Undersea Patrol."*

A submarine's hull (1) on the surface; (2) starting to dive; (3) fully submerged.

The Outlaw-Soldier

***"The Men in the Trojan Horse," by Kurt Singer** (Beacon Press. 258 pp. $3.50), is a collection of sketches of espionage agents, Nazi and Communist. Merle Miller, who reviews it here, is completing a new novel, "Reunion," for publication by Viking Press.*

By Merle Miller

KURT Singer, an Austrian who has become a naturalized American citizen, unquestionably knows his spies; most of his twenty books seem to have been on espionage agents, and the jacket of his latest, "The Men in the Trojan Horse," points out that his material on the subject has proved useful to such varied groups as the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission and the Twentieth Century-Fox people.

What's more, Mr. Singer handles the language better than most natives; thus, the several hundred thousands of us who like the late John Buchan, admire Graham Greene's entertainers, and wish Eric Ambler were more prolific will find more than a dozen thriller-type stories in "The Men in the Trojan Horse." As a dividend, all of them happen to be true.

Although Mr. Singer frequently refers to his own private sources, which are understandably (but nevertheless annoyingly) anonymous, there is very little in his latest book that a good digger at the main branch of the New York Public Library couldn't uncover in a few days—say, one of the seemingly several thousand ex-researchers for *Time* magazine. "The Men in the Trojan Horse" seems to be what is known in the business as a paste-up job.

There is nothing wrong with that, mind you; as a matter of fact, it's a considerable pleasure to have between cardboard covers well-written accounts of the careers of such varied rascals as the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem; Otto Katz, the Czech pseudo-intellectual among whose minor duties for the Soviets was to get rid of Jan Masaryk; Dr. Richard Sorge, the fantastic Baku-born journalist who so successfully pretended to be a Nazi that he was able to tell the Russians all about the Japanese plans for Pearl Harbor long before it happened; Vidkun Quisling, the Norwegian diplomat who, among other traits shared by the very junior Senator from Wisconsin, added a word to the dictionary; Gerhart Eisler, who—if he is still among the living—may wish he'd never tried to become a stowaway, and Noel Field, the fascinating Quaker who was once so close to Alger Hiss. Unhappily, although Mr. Singer has talked to Noel Field's sister in Urbana, Ill., he is unable to say whether the most famous and focal of the four Fields to disappear behind the Iron Curtain was in the Soviet secret service or the American.

In a superb last chapter, "Can We Trust the Ex-Communists?" Mr. Singer concludes: Well, with some exceptions, not too much. "As long as an ex-Communist goes on hating and through his hatred turns to a new radicalism he will remain an arrogant, dangerous, and foreign element in democratic society," he declares. The final line of his book is this: "Democracy must not forget that it can never be sure how many ex-Communists may still be on the payroll of the Soviet secret service."

Mr. Singer is a man of fierce integrity and of refreshing good sense. He is best when he throws away his notes and speaks his mind.

The Torpedo Catapault

***"Undersea Patrol," by Commander Edward Young** (McGraw-Hill. 298 pp. $3.95), is a British submarine officer's account of his experiences during World War II. Below it is reviewed by Commander Edward L. Beach, USN, author of "Submarine!"*

By Edward L. Beach

IT IS always a pleasure to read a book about the sea written by a man who knows his subject and who has himself experienced what he is writing about. There are an indefinable genuineness and sureness which always shine through regardless of whatever other qualities the book may or may not possess. Such a book is Commander Edward Young's "Undersea Patrol," one of the best true stories about World War II.

Commander Young conveys to his readers two things: the desperate back-to-the-wall struggle carried on by Britain and the British Navy in the early days of the war; and a moving, even lyrical, description of how it is to fight a war under the sea.

In these days, when the art of war is turning more and more toward the ability to strike swiftly and devastatingly from a remote or well-concealed position, it is natural that thoughts should turn to the possibilities of dominance of the sea by submarines alone, or perhaps by submarines and airplanes cooperatively. As the technocracy of destruction has become greater and more terrible surface fleets have had to devote their own strength increasingly to sheer self-preservation. The submarine, at least in the foreseeable future, can still operate alone, unsupported and essentially invulnerable in the trackless depths of the great water masses. It has demonstrated its potential as an instrument of attack by a weaker maritime nation. Can it, on the other side of the fence, successfully defend the freedom of the seas? If so one of our most pressing problems may be well on the way to solution.

In three major campaigns in two world wars submarines have played a tremendous part. Twice defeated by the combined weight of science of the free nations, and once—in the United States submarine campaign against Japan—overwhelmingly victorious at infinitesimal cost, they have only recently risen in general public interest to the point that it now demands to know how they work, what they can do, what are their limitations, and what manner of men operate them.

To say that the submariner is proud

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of his profession and its accomplishments is an understatement. We in the American submarine force are no less interested in the submarine service of our great ally Britain, or, with somewhat different emotions, in that of our sometime enemy Germany. By the time the trappings of national politics and motivation are done away a kinship of understanding can develop very easily with submariners of other services, even with the Germans. After all, the problems of the sea are the same, their effects on men and ships the same.

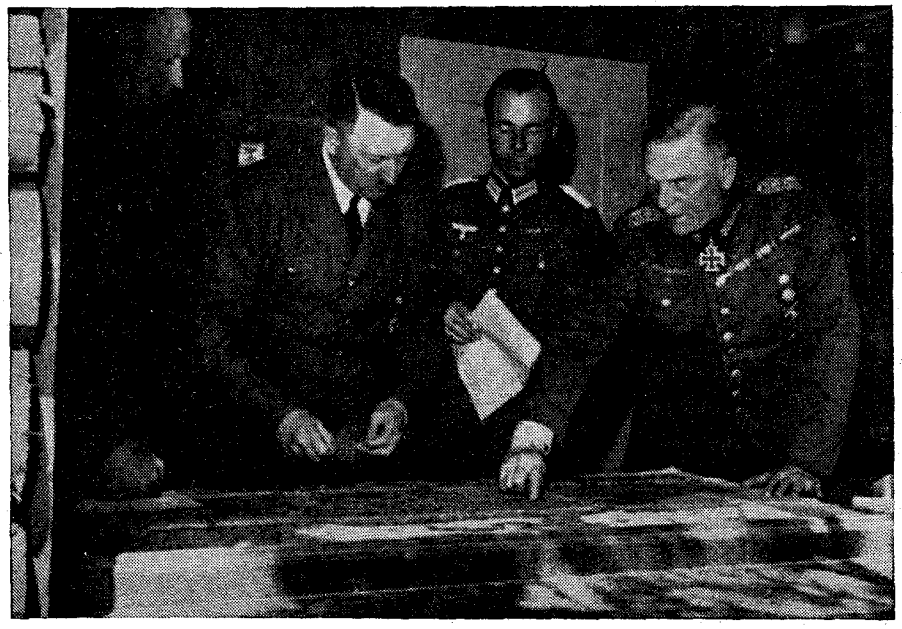
THIS reviewer's first reaction to Commander Young's book was the predictable professional one—that of comparing what he could learn in it about British submarines with his own prior acquaintanceship with them and with his own background as skipper of a United States submarine. In this he was not disappointed, for Commander Young, quite naturally and without straining for effect, injects sufficient technical submarining into his book to present a good picture to the foreign professional eye.

Some of Young's passages are sheer poetry, reflecting his previous experience before the war as a part-time author and in the publishing business. Such passages as the one in which he describes his first dive in HMS *Storm*, with the water bubbling up over the deck plates, air spouting through the venting holes, the ship diving irresistably down under the swell, and the sea racing up to meet him—all seen through the extended periscope, while he, standing in the control room of the ship, felt as though he were perched on top of it and riding under with her—have to be read and reread to appreciate their lyrical tone.

In organization, "Undersea Patrol" is divided into two parts. The first half is devoted to Young's early career in British submarines, during which he served in several boats and under several outstanding skippers. He also had the unenviable experience of being sunk, while a junior officer in HMS *Umpire*, by collision with a British trawler—and being one of approximately half a dozen men who got out of the sunken submarine and survived. The sacrifices, deprivations, and losses suffered by the British Navy and particularly the British Submarine Force in those early days are matter-of-factly, if desperately, recounted.

The second half of the book, appropriately titled "HMS *Storm*," is Young's account of his commission in that submarine and his subsequent service in the Mediterranean and Far Eastern waters.

In one respect Young is typically British. The English always strive for effect by playing down the dramatic—they excel in the art of the understatement—and in this respect Young is no different from other British authors. Consequently, although he proves himself to be no mean hand at objective description, Commander Young makes little effort to describe personal reactions and feelings during the stress of actual combat, preferring to leave that to the imagination of his readers. This reviewer finds no fault with this technique, except to remark that American audiences, educated perhaps to a slightly higher level of excitement, might thereby miss a complete understanding of some of the most brilliantly conducted submarine actions it has been his good fortune to study.



—*Acme.*

Hitler, Jodl (left), and Keitel (right) planning the invasion of England.

The Staff of Death

"The Nemesis of Power," by John W. Wheeler-Bennett *(St. Martin's Press. 829 pp. $12), is an account of the part the German Army played in politics from 1918 to 1945, written by an able British military historian. It is reviewed here by Telford Taylor, author of "Sword and Swastika," who served at the Nuremberg trials as U. S. chief of counsel with rank of brigadier general.*

By Telford Taylor

JOHN W. WHEELER-BENNETT'S "The Nemesis of Power: The German Army in Politics, 1918-1945," is the work of a proven master of contemporary historical letters, the author of three earlier books on modern German history: "Hindenburg: The Wooden Titan," "Brest Litovsk: The Forgotten Peace," and "Munich: Prologue to Tragedy." Under Mr. Wheeler-Bennett's skilled hands, his opulence of detail embellishes, without obscuring, the sweep of the narrative, and the brilliance of phrase is stimulating but never ostentatious. His latest work is by no means lacking in these qualities.

Nevertheless, the critical reaction to "The Nemesis of Power" has been mixed and, on the whole, more laudatory in this country than in the author's native England. Hanson Baldwin of *The New York Times* acclaims it as the capstone of Mr. Wheeler-Bennett's impressive edifice of writings, and pronounces it "probably the most important single historical work on modern Germany." In England the reviewer for *The Economist* declares that "as a work of historical art the book has conspicuous faults," while A. J. P. Taylor in *The New Statesman and Nation* comments caustically on the numerous cribs from the author's justly celebrated biography of Hindenburg, published in 1936.

The reasons for these divergent judgments, I believe, are not extraneous to the book, but lie between its covers. Enlightening as are the contents, and enthralling as are many narrative passages, the architecture is ill-balanced and incomplete. The result is a sequence of gripping historical themes, but they do not make a symphony.

The structural flaw is that, despite the breadth of the book's title, in actuality it is focused on the few German officers who sought, whether from ambition or sense of duty, to assert themselves individually as political factors. This cord of continuity

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is strong enough to bind together the first half of the book, ending with Hitler's accession to power and the death of Hindenburg. During this period the Army's leaders dominated German politics. Hindenburg, Groener, Seeckt, and Schleicher were far more the masters of Republican Germany than Ebert, Stresemann, Bruening, or Papen.

BUT thereafter Hitler consolidated his tyranny, and after the sacking of Blomberg and Fritsch in 1938 he bent the Officers' Corps to his will and the Army was left leaderless. The cord upon which the narrative is strung dwindles to a few threads, which soon snap, and after the account of the Battle of France Mr. Wheeler-Bennett is obliged to acknowledge that " 'The German Army in Politics' has ceased to have meaning" because "the Generals were more than content to leave politics to the Fuehrer." He then seizes a new cord, explaining that after 1940 the only generals "in politics" were those few who "kept alive the embers of Resistance."

True to this logic, the remainder of the book "centers around the conspirators and only incidentally concerns the Commanding Generals." From here on we read much of Beck, Tresckow, Oster, Stauffenberg, and the other men of July 20, 1944, but Rundstedt, Kesselring, Guderian, and Manstein are rarely mentioned, and even Rommel interests Mr. Wheeler-Bennett only as a somewhat "meretricious" participant in the 1944 conspiracy. To be sure, these men did not think of themselves as being "in politics," but the role of the generals in the Third Reich cannot be portrayed or assayed without accounting for what they thought and did.

And so it emerges that "The Nemesis of Power" comprises a masterful description of the Army in the Weimar Republic, followed by a fragmentary, disjointed, and sometimes inaccurate account of the Army in the Nazi era, and capped by an absorbing and beautifully-written story of the anti-Hitler *Putsch* of July 1944. In the second half of the book numerous matters of great politico-military importance are passed over almost or entirely without mention—*e.g.*, German participation in the Spanish Civil War, the role of the Luftwaffe, the Battle of Britain, the fateful strategic decisions of 1940-41, the Balkan and African campaigns, and the development of totalitarian warfare on the Eastern Front.

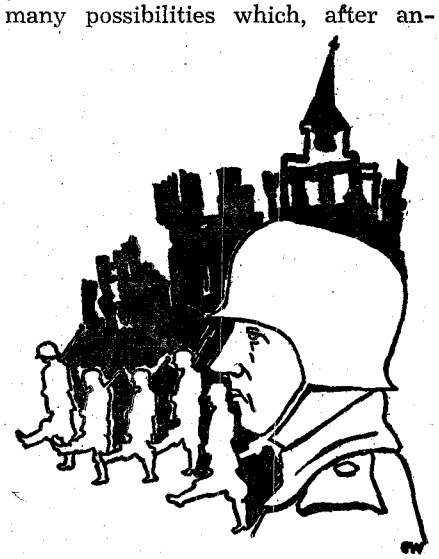
Much as these omissions and structural defects may be deplored, there is far more reason to congratulate than condole with the author. Few indeed are those who can match Mr. Wheeler-Bennett's capacity for compact and powerful characterization. As we turn these pages we can hear the disdain in Seeckt's voice, catch the glint from Fritsch's monocle, and feel the frost of a Prussian winter stiffen Hindenburg's moustache.

Until reading his account of the July 20 plot I had not realized how easily it might have "succeeded," in the sense that had the dice turned up differently Hitler would have been killed and the conspirators would have established a provisional military regime, at least in Berlin and Paris. All of which prompts the fascinating if academic question, "what if" Beck, Goerdeler, and their cohorts had emerged from the ruck of revolt and civil war as the *de facto* rulers of Germany in 1944? Should we have made peace with them?

Mr. Wheeler-Bennett thinks not; he is an unconditional-surrender man:

> Had the Allies succumbed to the temptation to reach a negotiated peace with a "new Germany" there would have been no Unconditional Surrender at Rheims and no formal recognition by the German Army of its Unconditional Defeat. The objectives for which the youth of the world had been sacrificed would not have been fulfilled; nor would the Allies have provided themselves with the opportunity to draw upon a clean page the blueprint of what they believed should be the future Germany. As has been said before in this book, the fact that the Allies have written what may be adjudged in the future as something woefully wrong upon the blank page—that, as a result of the Soviet menace, it has been found necessary to rearm Germany—cannot be blamed upon those who took the vital decisions in 1944 and 1945.

Questions of blame aside, surely there is room for argument that a peace in 1944 would have presented many possibilities which, after another year of war and destruction, were gone by 1945. In 1944 the Russians had not yet penetrated to the heart of Europe, and the world had not yet perceived the shadow of the atom. To be sure, these opportunities might have been sadly bungled, and perhaps Mr. Wheeler-Bennett is right that "it was necessary to make pragmatically clear to the German people that the disaster which was overwhelming them had been caused by their own blind, abject, unreasoning devotion to Adolf Hitler and the Nazi regime, and the defeat, complete and absolute, of German arms. . . . Martyrdom and immolation would not have achieved the Allies' purpose."



H- and A-Soldiers

ATOMIC BOMBS: "Troops must understand the importance of strict discipline in everything they do. . . . Only a high state of discipline will keep an army from disintegrating into a mob when an atomic bomb explodes." **"Atomic Weapons in Land Combat,"** by Col. G. C. Reinhardt and Lt. Col. W. R. Kintner (Military Service Publishing Co., $3.95), written primarily for military men and students, is also important to citizens who are not soldiers because it offers an opportunity to view part of the future through the Army's eyes. The authors are former instructors in atomic weapons at the Command and General Staff College in Fort Leavenworth, Kans. They consider the atomic bomb the product of "scientists, seeking an absolute weapon to abolish war," but emphasize that for all its vast powers it will certainly not put an end to fighting.

As for defenses, maneuvers at the atomic proving ground in Nevada throw light on certain aspects of the problem from the standpoint of the average soldier. He will have to work harder to protect himself. A foxhole about six feet deep will permit him to squat at the bottom and provides safety against the blast and heat of a bomb exploded in the air, for a radius of about 700 yards from ground zero. The book considers briefly the use of atomic artillery, the changing role of infantry, the mounting importance of intelligence reports, and tactics designed to maneuver the enemy into battlefield concentrations vulnerable to atomic attack—all within secrecy limitations. Secrecy also affects the meaningfulness of specific figures. Calculations such as the 700-yard estimate quoted above are based on the effect of a "nominal" bomb, the Model-T weapon dropped over Hiroshima. Modern bombs are considerably more potent, however.

—JOHN PFEIFFER.

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The Profession of a New Yorker

"The Second Tree from the Corner," by E. B. White *(Harper. 253 pp. $3), a collection of fugitive pieces by a* New Yorker *editor, gives Joseph Wood Krutch an occasion to analyze the peculiar magic of that weekly.*

By Joseph Wood Krutch

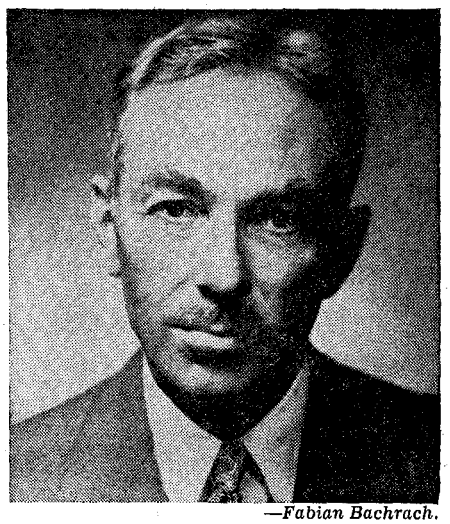
THE most remarkable thing about E. B. White is not that he is a good writer—though good writers are scarce enough—but that he should be the particular kind of good writer he is: highly personal, persistently oblique, and generally concerned less with the Queen than with the little mouse under her chair.

Any writer's conference could have told him that this would never do. Nowadays successful writers are often dull, fanatical, pompous, long-winded, incoherent, and sometimes illiterate, but they are "objective," their pages bristle with facts, and they "deal with an important subject." Mr. White breaks all the rules. He doesn't even know that the familiar essay is dead. And yet, for all this self-indulgence, he has managed somehow to achieve what Max Beerbohm called in his own case "a very pleasant little reputation." How come?

Take as an example his new book, "The Second Tree from the Corner," which seems to be precisely what every publisher knows won't sell. It is a mere collection, and a very miscellaneous one at that. There are two or three essays, a good many paragraphs from *The New Yorker*'s "Talk of the Town," two reprinted introductions to other books, and even quite a bit of verse mixed in with the prose. A mere scrapbook if there ever was one and composed of nothing except "fugitive" pieces. As any publisher would say to almost any other writer, the thing has no unity either external or internal—except perhaps the unity of a personality which is not a thing anybody now cares about. "What's your theme, Mr. White? What's your message? People have no time for this sort of thing in a dangerous world. The only kind of non-fiction that sells is the 'What You Ought to Know About . . .' kind. In fact, even that is hardly good enough. 'What You Don't Dare Not Know About . . .' is better. Good God, Mr. White, you are even genteel." And yet the chances are that "The Second Tree from the Corner" will not do too badly.

Perhaps the explanation is merely that Mr. White is good enough in his own special way to prove an exception to all rules, but if that is too simple then we shall have to fall back upon the more inclusive mystery of *The New Yorker* itself and say that Mr. White published principally in a magazine whose devoted readers are convinced that it can do no wrong even when it goes in for the sort of thing not to be tolerated anywhere else.

ONE sometimes gets as tired of admitting *The New Yorker*'s virtues as the Athenians did of hearing Aristides called "The Just." At such moments one can argue that it has much to answer for and that no single influence on the taste of the public ought to be so strong. It helped kill the familiar essay at the same time that it popularized certain substitutes for it. By inventing the all-too-readable "profile" with its stress upon eccentricity, it made soberer attempts to assess personalities or achievements seem dull. Avoiding cliches it established cliches of its own, and *New Yorker*-type fiction is as readily recognizable as *The Saturday Evening Post* type. It put the fear of not being "smart" into the hearts of people who had no business caring whether they were smart or not. It made all sorts of writers, artists, and editors turn themselves into unsuccessful imitators when they might better have gone their own ways. It even reached across the ocean to corrupt *Punch*. It redefined the chic, but no matter how the chic may be defined it tends to become the enemy of everything else. One of Oscar Wilde's characters made, apropos another character, the famous remark, "He always behaves like a gentleman—a thing no gentleman ever does," and a sort of extension of that remark suggests what *The New Yorker* has always striven to avoid. Intellectually as well as in every other respect it has always been aware of the difference between the false chic and the true—which changes from moment to moment. And on the whole it has been astonishingly successful in never being caught with last year's hat. In fact, it has finally got to the point where any hat it chose to wear became, *ipso facto*, the right one.



—*Fabian Bachrach.*

E. B. White—"how come?"

Worst of all, it has come to dominate a large group of devoted readers who take their every cue from its pages. The lady from Dubuque and the gentleman from Kansas City recognize one another as "my kind" by exchanging recollections of this cartoon or that paragraph. In fact, the members of certain groups have come to communicate almost exclusively in references to the sacred writings as successive instalments appear week after week.

If it had not managed to remain fresher than anyone would have supposed possibly it would be intolerable. Why hasn't it gone stale? Most of the old-time staffers seem modestly inclined to insist that the late Harold Ross is the answer and of him they have made a legend which they seem to believe in even more firmly than anyone else does. But what was his secret—if it really was his?

In part, no doubt, it was the realization that one can change just a little without seeming to change at all. Thus, though *The New Yorker* was born in the reckless Twenties, though as late as 1935 Wolcott Gibbs was protesting in the introduction to one of the first "Annuals" that the magazine had formulated no political philosophy and had "no intention of beginning now," it soon found in Mr. White a man who could introduce paragraphs about World Government and thus supply at least the minimum of "social consciousness" which had become indispensable without making it seem out of place on the next page but one to a Peter Arno cartoon.

At least equally important was the related policy which permitted its contributors to differ widely so long as they could, nevertheless, be made to confine their divergencies within a certain framework. One would be tempted, off-hand, to say that Mr. White is a "typical *New Yorker*

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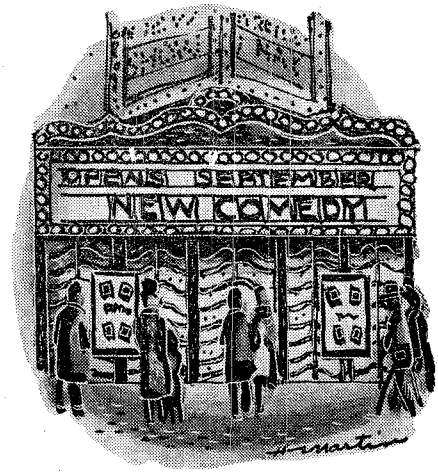
writer." And in certain respects he is. His manner is debonaire, so that even when discussing World Government or country life he manages to suggest that he is, nevertheless, a man who knows his way about town. When he lapses from "smartness" the lapse is deliberate and of course he writes with that almost finicky awareness of "good usage" which it is said Mr. Ross, otherwise a rough diamond, paradoxically insisted upon. But once all this has proved that he "belongs" he can be permitted to indulge in what would otherwise seem the wildest eccentricity.

For instance, one of the best pieces in the present volume is concerned with his well-known enthusiasm for Thoreau and tells how remembered sentences from "Walden" keep rising to his lips. "I go into a restaurant, we'll say, at the lunch hour, and the headwaiter approaches me, accusingly. 'All alone?' he asks. 'I feel it wholesome to be alone the greater part of the time,' I reply. Or I am walking along a street and meet an acquaintance—someone I haven't seen in a long time and don't care if I never see again. 'Where y'been all this time?' he demands. 'If a man does not keep pace with his companions,' I retort, 'perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer'."

WHAT business have such fancies as these in *The New Yorker*? Would Thoreau himself have been a welcome contributor? What would he have thought of a magazine which was "smart" first of all and is predisposed to favor stories and sketches whose scene is a bar—especially a bar which is either very elegant or very low? Yet Mr. White manages to get in not only quotations from Thoreau but also sentiments of his own which are decidedly Thoreauish. By what miracle can a passage like the following be made to seem chic? "Man's separation from his mother, Nature . . . becomes more complete with every passing year, and may finally reach the point of artifice where, to maintain life at all, we will have to resort to a recording—some recollection of the natural world, some grunting noise that takes us back to reality and stirs us to accept the half-forgotten sources of our original supply." That such things *can* be got in is, of course, a credit to Mr. White and to *The New Yorker* as well.

Perhaps, then, we shall just have to fall back upon our original explanation of Mr. White's improbable success: he is a good writer. After all, it will hardly do to explain him in terms of *The New Yorker* when you have to explain a good deal of *The New Yorker* in terms of him.



Noir and Rose

***"Jean Anouilh: Poet of Pierrot and Pantaloon," by Edward Owen Marsh** (British Book Centre. 201 pp. $3.50), is an analysis of the work of one of France's foremost dramatists. Our reviewer, Maurice Valency, is professor of drama at Columbia University.*

By Maurice Valency

JEAN Anouilh made his mark in the drama so long ago that one is likely to think of him as a contemporary of Giraudoux but, the fact is, he is not of that generation; he only seems to be. He was born in 1910. At twenty-eight he had already attained his majority as a dramatist. At forty-three he is by all odds the most distinguished playwright in France and one of the most active. Still a young man, he has already produced eighteen plays, of which six certainly must be considered works of permanent literary interest. If he is not a giant, therefore, he is certainly of the race of giants; he is at the very least, like Margutte in Pulci's poem, a dwarf giant.

Although as a writer Anouilh has rarely been off the stage in the last fifteen years, as a person he has kept resolutely out of the public eye. He began his career in the theatre at twenty, as secretary to the company of Louis Jouvet. When he married, shortly after joining this company, Jouvet lent him the props out of Giraudoux's "Siegfried" with which to set up housekeeping. He appears to have borrowed also the theme, for his first real success in the theatre was Pitoëff's production in 1937 of "Le Voyageur sans bagages," which has to do, like "Siegfried," with an amnesic veteran in search of his past. The following year Anouilh produced two plays, "Le Rendez-vous de Senlis" and "La Sauvage." It is arguable that these three plays, all produced before he was thirty, represent his major contribution to the drama of our time. At any rate they represent him very well and are amply sufficient, even if he were never to surpass them, to secure his position among the most significant writers of this age.

THE present study of Anouilh, the first in English, is obviously to some extent dependent upon the interesting analysis of Anouilh's drama which Hubert Gignoux published in 1946, but the intention is not quite the same and the discussion proceeds on another plane. Mr. Marsh's short book is intended mainly to make Anouilh somewhat more comprehensible to the English public. It begins with a critical introduction and concludes with a summary of which the chief idea is that Anouilh's dramatic pattern is essentially dualistic. As such it is the result of the juxtaposition of two irreconcilable truths, the truth of innocence and the truth of experience. The first is pure and beautiful; its tint is rose. The second is cynical and corrupt; its color is black. The play of these different-colored truths within the individual leads to tragedy, to loneliness, despair, and death.

As a matter of fact, Anouilh clearly invites this sort of analysis. He himself divides his work into "Pièces Noires" and "Pièces Roses." If in recent years he has abandoned these categories in favor of the single designation "Pièces Brillantes" it is possibly because, as he progressively seeks a plane of more studied unreality, the color of his plays moves beyond the limits of the visible spectrum; one would have to call them ultraviolet and infra-red. In any case, it is undeniable that from beginning to end Anouilh's dramatic patterns involve a very full development of the contrast between the purity of the ideal and the degradation of the individual in the material world.

Anouilh writes in general out of a deep resentment. It is the residual aggression of the sensitive adolescent for whom any contact with the hurly-burly of life is likely to be painful. But Anouilh is ingenious. He has a marvelous sense of the comic and an exquisite poetic fantasy.

The bulk of the present study is devoted to a play-by-play description of Anouilh's drama. The play-digest is perhaps not the most amusing of literary *genres*, and Mr. Marsh's style, unlike that of Anouilh, is on the whole more earnest than brilliant. Nevertheless, this study of a major dramatist is in many ways both sensitive and just, and a certain degree of obtuseness is very pardonable in relation to an author so intricate as Anouilh.

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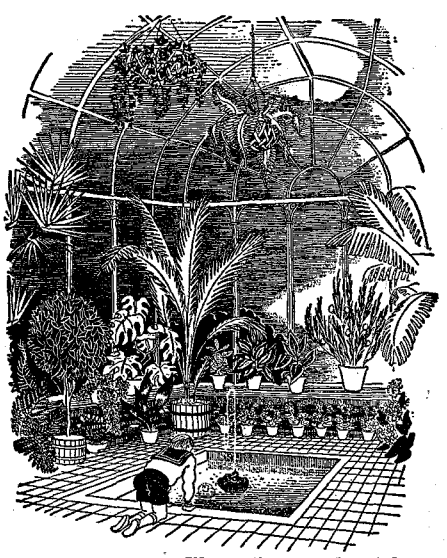
Requiem for Grandpa

"All Done from Memory," by Osbert Lancaster *(Houghton Mifflin. 199 pp. $3.75), is an English writer's somewhat rococo recollections of his childhood.*

By George Dangerfield

IT IS impossible to convey, without extensive quotation, any notion of the delights that await the readers of Osbert Lancaster's captivating little book, "All Done from Memory." This is a kind of happy requiem for the English Victorian upper-middle classes—or rather for that Edwardian and neo-Georgian rearguard which, during the first fourteen years of the twentieth century, practised with great success and complete unselfconsciousness the art of being totally impervious to ideas. Here you will find them in their London fastnesses and their country houses, with their fantastically cluttered rooms, their rich meals, and their solid Anglican habits. Were they really as wonderful as Mr. Lancaster's highly charged memories of his childhood make them? Possibly not; but "All Done from Memory" is not social history, and it would be a mistake to read it as if it were.

Indeed, where Mr. Lancaster's relatives are concerned, the commonplaces of the historical judgment are best suspended altogether. Obviously, imperviousness is no virtue, and history has always given it very low marks. On the other hand, these "upper middles" had a strict regard for the truth as they saw it, and a set of rigid moral standards which, along with their marked eccentricities, could only have been maintained by people of a conservative outlook and a comfortable income. *Requiescant in pace:* they have all vanished, defeated at last by taxes, by Sunday weekends, by the rise of an intelligentsia, by World War I, by that very principle of time and change which they had so resolutely banished from such formidable strongholds as St. John's Parish, Notting Hill.



—Illustrations by the author.

Mr. Lancaster's two male grandparents are perhaps the leading figures in this book. His maternal grandparent was a retired merchant of Hong Kong, whose Victorian taste for useless ornaments had been ably abetted by the Chinese craftsman, so that his house in Dorset overflowed with "objects of a transcendental monstrosity." Possibly the finest examples of these were his horse-racing trophies gained at Kailoon, cups which the Chinese silversmiths had covered not merely with the conventional steeplechasers, but with dragons, horseshoes wreathed in tiger lilies, and horse masks peering out of bamboo thickets amidst clouds of butterflies. He was, perhaps, just a little bit of a snob; and the visits of his seventy-year-old maiden sister, whose girlish costumes and strong soprano voice made a notable addition to morning church, always drove him to his bed (for ill health alone was an excuse for not attending divine service) during each Sunday of her stay. Eccentricity, he thought, was tolerable only in old families.

Mr. Lancaster's paternal grandparent was no snob, though his taste for heraldry indicated that he may have been a frustrated romantic. A successful businessman, who had been knighted for his many philanthropies, he was of a truly fine appearance. "From immediately below the nostrils right down to the navel there cascaded a snow-white beard of that particular strength and thickness only achieved by those who have never in their life employed a razor." The effect was one of great benevolence, though it usually aroused a certain nervous awe in the beholder "partly due, I think, to the slightly enigmatic expression—so marked in Moslem women—of those whose mouths are always hidden." The old man could be a Jove as well as a Santa Claus: the mention of the name of Oscar Wilde in his presence by some Belgian refugees during World War I produced a denunciation that was never forgotten.

Among this gentleman's many benevolences was the maintenance, at his country estate in Norfolk, of certain hangers-on whose claims to his charity depended on three things—poverty, piety, and physical affliction. Naturally this led to some sharp contests. Since both Miss Childs and Miss Marple, for example, were equally poor and equally pious, did Miss Childs's case of advanced cataract count as much as Miss Marple's curvature of the spine? "The fact that Miss Marple . . . had also a heavy cavalry moustache did not count," Mr. Lancaster tells us, "as the Lancasters themselves were a hirsute lot (one of my great-aunts had several times been mistaken for Lord Kitchener), and among them such an adornment was considered rather a source of pride than of shame."

I do not know whether or not this quotation conveys what seems to me to be the leading note of this book, and that is a rococo reverence. A lady with a humpback and a heavy moustache is not an object of fun; and Mr. Lancaster does not poke fun at Miss Marple. She has been as tenderly translated to his upholstered elysium as any one of his vintage relatives—or as the deviationist Vicar of St. John's who announced in what proved to be his last sermon in that respectable fane that he had been advised in a dream of the disappearance of all women from Heaven, the female part of the race having been finally judged incapable of salvation. Excessive reverence for one's own past is apt to be stultifying in life and stuffy in print; but reverence which is tempered by a noticeable wit can be enchanting, as "All Done from Memory" triumphantly proves.

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A New Nonanthology

"i: Six Nonlectures," by E. E. Cummings *(Harvard University Press. 113 pp. $3), a collection of lectures the poet-painter delivered last year at Harvard, is in essence his own autobiography. Charles Norman, who reviews it here, is the author of "The Pundit and the Player: Dr. Johnson and Mr. Garrick" and other books.*

By Charles Norman

E. E. CUMMINGS has given so much delight over the years—by his poetry, his painting, and his personality—that a deeply serious side of him, that of the dedicated man, has been overlooked. The Charles Eliot Norton lectures, delivered at Harvard last spring and the previous fall and now gathered into a volume called "i: Six Nonlectures," should help to bring him into sharper focus; they are the autobiography of a man who, through all the strange deviations of a strange age, has remained true to himself—one, moreover, so completely creative that even his lectures, which he calls "nonlectures," offer new esthetic experiences. Every writer, particularly the young one, should read this little book; it will inspire and sustain him. Seldom, indeed, has the subject of the creator and the creative faculty been so frankly and inspiringly presented. "Writing, I feel, is an art; and artists, I feel, are human beings," Mr. Cummings declares in "nonlecture four."

On the other hand, I am afraid that his book will vex the intellectuals, who seldom lack another kind of explanation for anything, particularly works of art. Although the language of art is seemingly timeless, their palaver changes every year, like women's fashions. Who has not observed the phenomenon of "advance guard" critics writing only for each other? Mr. Cummings has, and is dev-

—*Marion Morehouse.*

E. E. Cummings—"deeply serious."

astating about them. In "nonlecture one" he quotes Rilke:

"Works of art are of an infinite loneliness and with nothing to be so little reached as with criticism. Only love can grasp and hold and fairly judge them." His comment is: "In my proud and humble opinion, those two sentences are worth all the *soi-disant* criticism of the arts which has ever existed or will ever exist."

I have referred to this book as an autobiography; and it is strictly that, for Mr. Cummings reviews his whole life, from his birth in Cambridge to the time he delivered these "nonlectures" there, taking in New York, Paris, two wars, and several skirmishes on the way. It is also a little anthology of his work, both prose and poetry, as well as the loved poems of others—some of them surprising in this context: Wordsworth, Nashe, Chaucer, Swinburne, Charles d'Orléans, Shakespeare, Dante, Burns, Donne, Walther von der Vogelweide, and several ballads, one of them delightfully new to this reviewer, as it may have been to the "nonlecturer's" audience. Mr. Cummings has again demonstrated the truth of his own dictum, expressed on a memorable occasion in 1945, that "every artist's strictly illimitable country is himself."

"i: Six Nonlectures" has been tastefully produced by the press of his alma mater, and its smooth black jacket is adorned with a superb portrait photograph of the author by Marion Morehouse.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S KINGSLEY DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 1035)

FRANCES FROST:
THE FIRST SNOW

The first snow, soft as a kitten's paw,
skitters across the woodshed eaves,
skips to the crimson barberry haw, . . .
pats withered grass and Queen Anne's lace,
humps with a sly and silver mitten
and gives me a flurry full in the face.

Notes

WONDER-FULL STORIES: Even though the folk tale in its raw form does not flourish today, it constitutes the bedrock of the literature we still read and hear. A very handy collection of ninety stories from the folklore of all countries has been gathered by James R. Foster in **"The World's Great Folktales"** (Harper, $3.95). One folk superstition he does not believe is fear of number 13, for he arranges his tales in that many groups. There are common themes in the folklore of different cultures in different times; here they are classified in such groupings as Vampires, Saints and Sinners, Witches and Wizards, Maladies and Remedies. But there is no monotony in the groups, for the variations are fresh and wonder-full.

As an editor Mr. Foster did not wield a pair of scissors; he worked. This is evident in the wide range of esoteric sources where he found his tales, and in his own translations and adaptations of many of them. His versions are in good, plain English, with an absence of "style" that makes them more affecting. Although the publisher does not mention it, Mr. Foster's "History of the Pre-Romantic Novel in England" was published in 1949 by the Modern Language Association. In his newest book, directed at a much wider public, he has admirably achieved a popular appeal without vulgarity. —ROBERT HALSBAND.

COLERIDGE SYNTHESIS: The phrase "myriad-minded," which Samuel Taylor Coleridge applied to Shakespeare, easily describes him, too, for, however short his accomplishments fell of his grandiose ambition, they still demonstrated his versatile and massive intellect. A few of his poems, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" in particular, have permeated the popular imagination. And in recent years he has been subjected to so much scholarly investigation that a brief synthesis by an informed and tolerant critic is valuable if only as a milepost. Humphrey House's **"Coleridge"** (British Book Centre, $2) is just such a book. Although based on the Clark Lectures of 1951-1952 at Trinity College, Cambridge, the six essays are far more closely reasoned, detailed, and documented than lectures usually are. They proceed in logical fashion from a scrutiny of Coleridge's mind to his poetic theory, his poetry, and criticism.

Although a good part of Mr. House's analysis of the poetry is a refutation of other critics'—especially John Livingston Lowes's classic study and Robert Penn Warren's recent "new criticism" of the "Ancient Mariner"—he looks at

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it with a fresh eye and an erudite mind. (Some of his new material comes from the poet's unpublished notebooks.) He puts to rest such widespread misconceptions as the *dis*unity of "Kubla Khan" and the *un*moral lesson of the Mariner. As a guide to the labyrinthine genius of Coleridge he has written an excellent handbook.

—R. H.

FICTION FROM THE BLUE GRASS COUNTRY: As a literary locale Kentucky has been fertile for the growth of regional novels. Its moonshine and feuds, its Daniel Boone and Indian frontiers, its fine women and glossy horses—they have all served novelists from as far back as Gilbert Imlac in 1793 to as recently as Robert Penn Warren in 1950 (in "World Enough and Time"). An efficient bibliography of **"The Kentucky Novel"** has been compiled by Lawrence S. Thompson and Algernon D. Thompson (University of Kentucky Press, $2.50). Most of their entries are books of adult fiction, with smaller groups of juveniles and of dime novels. For each book they give a brief summary or other comment, thus making their lists functionally useful.

In their introduction they show how the creations of novelists have conformed to the evolving history of that region.

Since the historical novel, at least since the time of Walter Scott, has been a sophisticated and respectable genre, it deserves serious study. Regional bibliographies like this one could be set up for all the exciting backgrounds our country has lent to the novelists.

—R. H.

FICTION

New England Traveler

"Rainbow on the Road," by Esther Forbes *(Houghton Mifflin. 243 pp. $3.75), is the story of the peregrinations of Jude Rebaugh, painter, through mid-nineteenth century New England. Below it is reviewed by James Thomas Flexner, author of "American Painting: First Flowers of Our Wilderness" and other books on early painters.*

By James Thomas Flexner

THE mood of Esther Forbes's charming novel "Rainbow on the Road" is that of a sunlit summer day, variegated with thunderstorms which pass quickly, leaving behind them an even brighter landscape.

Mrs. Forbes's protagonists are Jude Rebaugh, an itinerant painter, and Eddy, his fourteen-year-old helper, who is made to tell the story. In a buff chaise behind a butter-yellow horse, they move over the roads of mid-nineteenth-century New England; and it is these roads, with the life upon them and the villages through which they pass, which are the real heroes of the book.

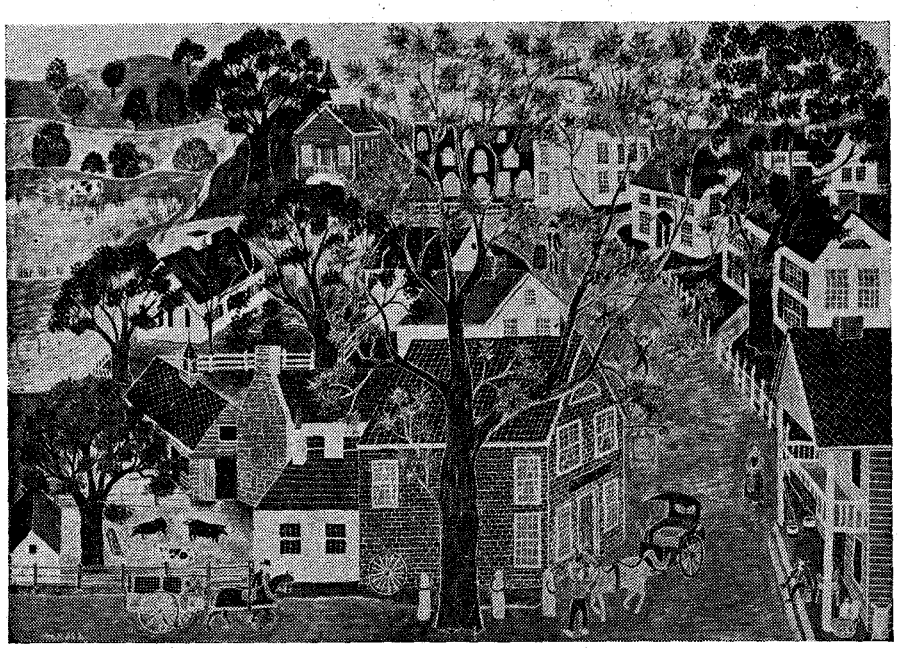
Mrs. Forbes uses not sex—there never was a purer book—or dagger to lure the reader from page to page, but relies on a skill which most modern historical novelists seem to regard as secondary, on literary style, on the ability to evoke the wonders of everyday living. In brilliant passages, so simple that their artistry is never obvious, she reveals a clear morning, the strange personality of a ballad-singer walking the highways, all the luxuriant human life that pours out upon a traveler who knocks on many doors.

In other novels Mrs. Forbes has most effectively dipped her brush in somber hues, but this novel is so lyrical, so gay that when she uses darker notes for more than contrast they seem slightly out of key. The book does have a plot in the conventional sense—Jude Rebaugh is mistaken for a Robin-Hoodlike bandit who turns into a murderer—but all this seems an afterthought; the plot does not make a real appearance until we are halfway through her delightful pages. Although in themselves extremely well done, the scenes of violence necessitated by the plot—they are few—break the mood.

MRS. FORBES, who won a Pulitzer Prize for her biography of Paul Revere, never forgets the difference between historical fiction and history. She pulls no actual characters in by the hair; she gives us no classroom lectures, but uses her vast erudition as food for her imagination. She treats the past no differently from the way other skilful novelists treat the times in which they themselves lived.

Although our attention is never called to this, her picture of what modern theorists call a "primitive" or "folk painter" is more accurate than the one we will find in books by these same theorists. Jude Rebaugh feels less kinship with other artists than with the itinerant peddlars of nutmegs, the showmen traveling with aged lions, whom he meets on his beloved roads. He has no conscious theories of art, and when he happens on a conventionally trained painter he does not argue for his own practice. He is depressed and loses his ability to finish pictures.

This is true to the times but, as it should be in a novel, incidental. "Rainbow on the Road" will long be read and cherished not because of the facts it contains, but because of its imaginative power.



—Jacket design by Honka Karaz, for "Rainbow on the Road."

". . . all the luxuriant human life that pours out upon a traveler."

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The Enemy the City

"The Joker," by Jean Malaquais *(translated by Herma Briffault. Doubleday. 344 pp. $3.95), is a fantasy about life in a bureaucratic state where thought control and brain-washing are the order of the day.*

By Laurent LeSage

THERE is little to indicate at first in Jean Malaquais' "The Joker" that we are not beginning just another grim and grinding autobiography of one of those dreary chaps who have so often been made the "hero" of modern French novels. Pierre Javelin is a door-to-door salesman for a line of cosmetics, and as the story opens is hearing the welcome news that he is getting a 2 per cent commission raise. Seeing here a plodding white-collar worker of no particular physical or intellectual distinction, we place him promptly among the progeny of Duhamel's Salavin, the nondescripts of modern society we read about so often. But the "City" in which the story is laid cannot be of this planet or our times—buildings of four or five thousand apartments distributed between fifty or so straight parallelepipeds arranged in quincunx!

The afternoon when Pierre with his sample cases steps into the apartment of Dominique Plot we know that, instead of the everyday world we assumed we were in, we are in a fantastic land where only surrealists and science-fiction writers might feel at home. In the midst of the extraordinary disorder of the flat a young woman sits cracking hazel nuts with long transparent fingers. Behind her a Van Gogh hangs upside down on the wall and an electric metronome moves back and forth with a persistent ticktack. A few hours later when Pierre enters his own apartment, and finds

Jean Malaquais—"many-hued."

there complete strangers who act as if they had lived there for years, we wonder just what sort of lunacy or mystification we are dealing with.

The narrative henceforth is concerned with Pierre's dazed wanderings through this futuristic "City," plagued by constant surveillance and successive encounters with a Doctor Babitch, who lurks behind doors with a whole bag of Doctor Cagliostro tricks. Pierre is a tracked man, fighting to elude the unseen malevolent forces that are trying to paralyze him in a nightmare. Pierre is not, however, a case of mental derangement but the hero of an allegory.

This becomes clear when we learn that Pierre is being persecuted for having written poetry and distributed his verses anonymously throughout the city. Deplorably hackneyed as this device is, it leaves no doubt as to the author's allegorical intention. He is demonstrating life in a highly evolved bureaucratic state where thought control and brain-washing have dissolved all individual freedom. When the City finds a cosmetic salesman surreptitiously circulating verses the whole enormous organization is mobilized to suppress him in a "self-protective" impulse.

As a stylist Jean Malaquais exhibits the brutality of a Hemingway or a Céline with a great measure of the latter's violent imagery and gift of words. "Strident, many-hued, like cockatoos on their swings, ideas and images rock back and forth beneath my skull." His subjects of predilection are people without passports, the hunted or unwanted whose despondency, apprehensiveness, or terror he knows how to make us feel most keenly. On "The Joker" Malaquais has lavished all his talents. The writing is so fine, in fact, that you can enjoy the book even though you ignore the allegory. I am inclined to recommend that you do.

Time

By Witter Bynner

I DO NOT know what year
it is,
I do not know what day,
The reason being clear,
it is
That you have gone away.
And yet this is the way
it is,
I shall not know what
year
Nor hour of the day it is
When you are safely here.

Old Line of Business

Natalie Anderson Scott's "The Little Stockade" *(E. P. Dutton. 254 pp. $3.50) is an almost tape-recorded report on life among the captives of vice on New York City's West Side.*

By James Kelly

TOM STARK, destroyed in Natalie Anderson Scott's "The Little Stockade" by a mirage of fun and sex, and Jimmy Murphy, who drowned several years and four Scott novels ago in the alcoholic seas of "The Story of Mrs. Murphy," are blood brothers. No other fictional characters quite resemble them. As heroes of casually written footnotes on personal and community degeneracy, without nobility or salvage value except as texts for fireside sermons to the very young, the two boys make restless traveling companions for the reader who'd like to look on the brighter side. In their supporting casts are a number of arresting people who work hard at depravity and suitably illustrate their assigned pages from a vice reporter's notebook.

Steve's lunchroom, in the warehouse district of New York's West Side, serves as stage setting for big and little shots of the prostitution business. To it come "regular" cops, girls who work the beats, houses, and *voyeur* shows, dapper little men who live off the earnings of the girls, harried customers who have heard of Steve's, and truck-drivers who drop in for coffee. It's quite a society that middle-aged Tom Stark joins when he leaves his home and job to come to New York for a vacation.

Tom is a perfect mark for Eddie, an ambitious, clean-cut boy who earns clothes money by steering suckers to joints controlled by vice boss Joe Brown and by secretly selling the services of his trusting fiancee. Before long Tom is nearly broke and hopelessly involved as a patron of Eddie's girl, Marie. And Eddie, full of plans to supplant Brown, seems to be riding high on the proceeds of his own "little stockade." But Marie's worldly Aunt Janet suddenly goes into action. Notifying Brown, her former employer, of Eddie's schemes and enlisting Stark, who admires her as much as he hates his young nemesis, she sets up a lurid climax when almost everybody loses.

Because it's a faithful tape recording of *whatever* happens and because the author probes seriously for human motives in this part of the underworld, "The Little Stockade" has its own merits as an antiseptic slumming expedition.

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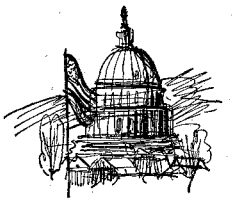
The Forging of a Master



"Franklin D. Roosevelt: The Ordeal," by Frank Friedel *(Little, Brown. 320 pp. $6), is the second volume of a biography of the wartime President; this one covers the years 1919 to 1928. Our reviewer, John D. Hicks, is Morrison Professor of History at the University of California, Berkeley.*

By John D. Hicks

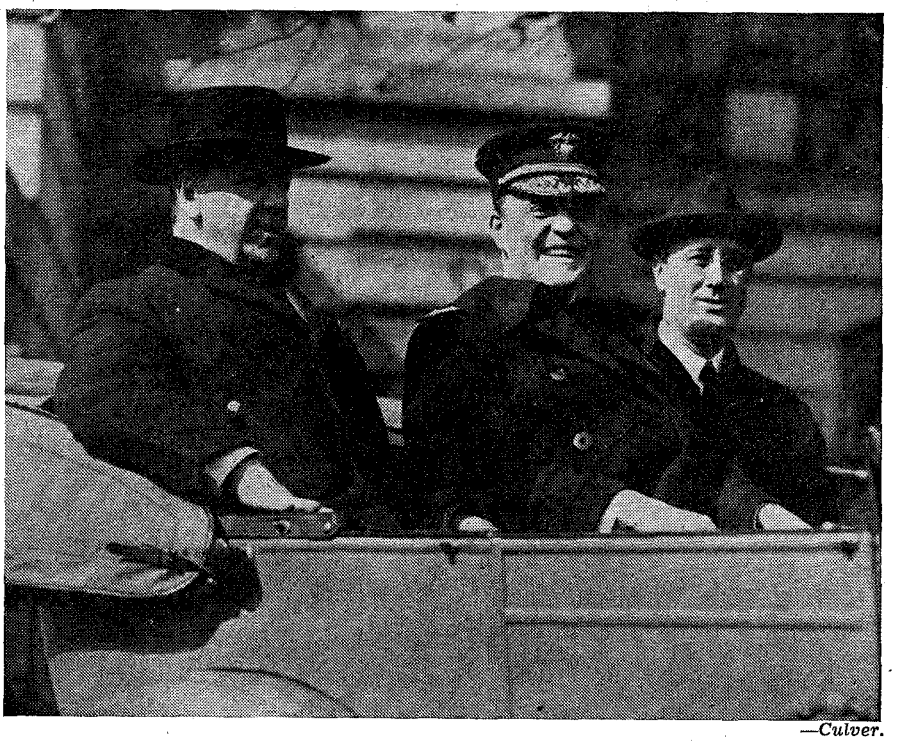
THE SECOND volume of Frank Friedel's extraordinary biography of Franklin D. Roosevelt gives us the day-by-day, week-by-week pattern of its subject's life during the period of his relative eclipse, 1919-1928. One can agree with Charles A. Beard that pure objectivity in historical writing is a mere figment of the imagination; but, even so, one must admit that in this book Freidel has trod a wary path through the multitudinous manuscripts, tape recordings, interviews, memoirs, and documents upon which his narrative is based. No one could accuse him of being either an "incense-swinger," to borrow a term more often associated with the name of Theodore Roosevelt, or a "Roosevelt-hater," to reach forward into the period of Franklin D. Roosevelt's Presidency.

Throughout Mr. Friedel follows the dictum made famous by Al Smith: "Let's look at the record." If the record speaks well for FDR he follows it; if it does not he still follows it and, what is even more important, without change of emphasis. One suspects that the Roosevelt charm has not been altogether lost on the author, but he writes as a historian, not as a partisan. And, incidentally, he writes well. The day is about done when the professional historian can rest content with writing grade-B English. In general he does not only a far more adequate job of research, but also a far better job of writing than most of the literary lights who invade his field.

It was during the decade covered by this book that polio struck Roosevelt and crippled him for life, an episode that might easily have thrown off balance a less painstaking investigator than Freidel. The reader emerges with the conviction that Roosevelt's illness was far less the determining factor in his career than sentimentalists have made it out to be; he was already a shrewd political operator with a well-defined goal and the beginnings of a program. The miracle of Roosevelt is not that his illness changed the course of his life, but rather that in spite of his illness he continued forward along the course he had already marked out. He even had the wisdom to make his enforced inactivity serve the ends he sought. He "tried to assemble from everywhere ideas for his progressive program . . . to read many books and talk to persons of all sorts. . . . It was from conversation that he learned the most, and with incredible rapidity." He did, indeed, as his health mended try his hand at business, but his heart was not much in it, and the qualities that were to make him a superb politician tended to make him an indifferent businessman.

Watched carefully in every political move by his shrewd and devoted political adviser, Louis Howe, Roosevelt early made the Presidency his conscious objective; when he wrote in 1927 that he had "no desire either to run for the Presidency or to be President" Freidel brands the statement as "political applesauce." He hoped to unite the Democratic Party, and made friends in every faction of it. He used his physical condition, much as a deaf man sometimes uses his inability to hear, to avoid candidacy for office when either by winning or by losing he might jeopardize the main chance. He ran for governor in 1928, contrary to Howe's advice, and he was more loyal to Smith than Smith was to him; but his sense of timing in this case turned out to be even shrewder than Howe's. He was an inimitable campaigner, loved the limelight, followed easily the moods of an audience, saw at first glance the limitless possibilities at the radio, and undertook to master the technique of using it well.

Through all this ran a sense of mission. Roosevelt did indeed wish to be President; but he also had in mind a program of political and social reform. His views were not always the same; they had a way of evolving with the times. But he quite consistently thought of himself as a Jeffersonian, perhaps even as another Jefferson, whose privilege it might be to restore the Government to the people, to champion the underprivileged against the overprivileged, and to build a foreign policy that would preserve world peace. He knew that to attain these goals he would ever be dependent on the support of the public opinion; he could lead only as fast as his following would permit. But he stood ready, even eager, to "press toward the mark for the prize."



—*Culver.*

FDR as Assistant Secretary of the Navy (with Secretary Daniels and Admiral McGowan).

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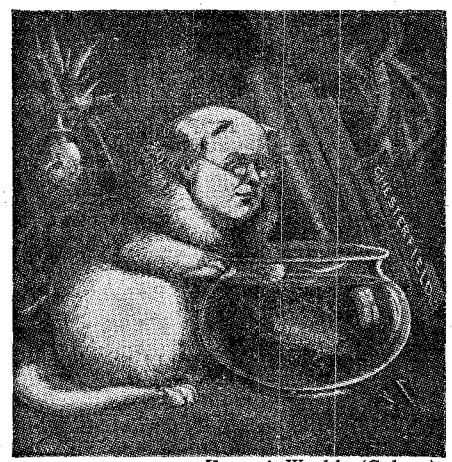
Lincoln's Thorn

"Horace Greeley: Nineteenth Century Crusader," by Glyndon G. Van Deusen *(University of Pennsylvania Press. 446 pp. $5), is a full-length portrait of the great editor of the* New York Tribune. *Roy F. Nichols, who reviews it here, is professor of history at the University of Pennsylvania and received a Pulitzer Prize for his book on "The Disruption of American Democracy."*

By Roy F. Nichols



—*Harper's Weekly (Culver).*

Greeley: "A Sly Puss After the Fish."

HORACE Greeley has tempted the writers of full-length studies for almost a hundred years. Everybody's biographer, James Parton, yielded first in 1855 and Professor Glyndon G. Van Deusen of the University of Rochester is at least the eleventh to sit down with pen in hand to cogitate on the simplicity or the intricacy of Greeley's character. In almost every instance literary interest has been invoked not only by the man but also by the great newspaper which he created. The *Tribune* of New York City was a mighty voice in the land. The personality of the editor was reflected in its utterance while at the same time the attention which the utterance attracted undoubtedly conditioned the evolution of the personality. The two were combined in a unity which makes it essential to consider them as equal parts in any study. But the matter is more complex than an analysis of a mystic duality. The relations of Greeley and the *Tribune* to New York City in which they lived and the United States to which they spoke are likewise intimate and subtle.

Horace Greeley therefore presents almost a metaphysical challenge to those who would write about him adequately. Naturally, all who have essayed to analyze him have not been gifted with equal powers of comprehension or expression. The earlier biographers defined their tasks simply, the better of the later students have contented themselves with carefully defined phases of this great subject. Not until now do we have a scholar who is competent and willing to face the problem squarely and to include the major part of its implications.

Professor Van Deusen has been in an ideal situation and has had a preparation for grasping the full scope of his subject, which all too few authors enjoy. Greeley developed to maturity as a spokesman for the Whig Party. In this party there were two great interests, Southern and Northern. Mr. Van Deusen first studied the party and its Southern interest in writing the biography of Henry Clay. Then the University of Rochester acquired the papers of two of the great Northern Whig operators, Thurlow Weed and William H. Seward of New York. The author continued his work by writing a notable biography of Weed. From these two studies he gained a wide familiarity with the Whig situation and was in a strategic position to study the life of the great journalist of the Whigs. He has skilfully capitalized all these advantages, and the result is a work that blends Greeley, the *Tribune*, New York City, and the nation in an understandable relationship.

Greeley started out in life in a rural New England backwater and by a combination of Puritan virtue and Horatio Alger luck and pluck, combined with sufficient idiosyncratic genius, emerged as a world figure. Undersexed, neurotic, with his sanity on occasion wavering with threatening instability, he sensed the spirit of his age and uttered the thoughts that so many were glad to think were theirs. In many homes the Bible and the *Weekly Tribune* shaped the emotion, thought, and action of humble and important alike throughout the USA.

The great editor was absurdly unable to judge himself or others. Much that he thought and wrote verged on the crank, lunatic fringe. During the Civil War he was one of the greatest crosses that Lincoln had to bear and what his poor wife suffered no one will ever know. But he was a voice of America and a voice which people heeded despite much uncomplicated hypocrisy and quackery. He thought of himself as a crusader for righteousness and within limits he was. It is not the least of the many virtues of Professor Van Deusen that he understands what these limits were.

Wilson the Learner

"Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Era," by Arthur S. Link *(Harper. 331 pp. $5), the first volume in Harper's New American Nation Series, is a scholarly account of American political and diplomatic history during the half-dozen years before our entry into World War I. Here it is reviewed by John M. Blum, associate professor of American history at MIT, author of "Joe Tumulty and the Wilson Era" and the forthcoming volume "The Republican Roosevelt."*

By John M. Blum

DRAWING upon his prodigous research on the life and times of Woodrow Wilson, Arthur S. Link has achieved the difficult goal he set for himself in writing "Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Era": "To comprehend and re-create the political and diplomatic history of the United States" from 1910 to 1917. His account of the first four years of the Wilson Administration supersedes all previous accounts. His accuracy and perception set a standard that will challenge the contributors to Harper's New American Nation Series, of which his is the first volume published. Indeed, his notes and critical bibliography, as well as his text, demonstrates how complete is his mastery of the historical domain he has elected to command.

Professor Link allocates approximately equal space to domestic and international issues. His brief but trenchant descriptions of the break-up of the Republican Party, the nomination of Wilson, and the campaign of 1912 rest upon the best recent scholarship, including the first volume of his own biography of Wilson. In more detail he analyzes the achievements of the New Freedom. Here he reveals, as previous historians have not, how the influence of agrarian progressives, organized labor, and social reformers, and how the exigencies of national politics forced Wilson in 1913 to modify his initially conservative policies and by 1916 in effect to adopt the program of the New Nationalism. This program, as the book shows, involved the broad use of Federal power, the money license, and the redistributive taxation that later characterized the New Deal and Fair Deal. It was sponsored by the kind of coalition upon which Franklin Roosevelt later relied. By intent restrained in his commentary, Professor Link does not say what his analysis

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implies, that on such a coalition committed to such a program depends the continuing adaptation of American public arrangements to the changing demands of democracy.

To an understanding of American foreign policy this book also contributes. "Missionary diplomacy"—Professor Link's relevant phrase for the Wilsonian attitudes George Kennan dislikes—had unintended consequences, often lamentable, throughout the Caribbean. In Mexico its tragic effects derived from Wilson's pursuit of good intentions without a systematic appreciation of Mexican conditions and without adequate consideration of the probable demands on and limits to American military and naval strength. Similar shortcomings troubled European policies.

THE picture of Wilson that emerges indicates that historians by and large have overrated that obstinate man whose reliance upon his often superb but always intuitive judgments was conditioned sporadically by his deference to the demands of politics. A brilliant verbalizer and for specific pieces of legislation at times a brilliant manager of Congress, Wilson failed soon enough to recognize and preach the need for preparedness, failed to provide the kind of leadership that might have instructed the American people about the significance of the European war and their stake in its outcome. Clarifying Wilson's limitations as well as his talents, this book suggests the dimensions of the modern tasks of the Federal Government and of its chief executive.

Had these suggestions been explicit the book, purposely designed for students of history, might appeal more to lay readers. They may find difficult the unrelieved exposition, a product of the author's vast learning and restricted space. In using that space he might have benefited by giving less attention to Mexican and European affairs and granting more to a fuller account of Wilson's conservative opposition whose postures, significant in Wilson's time, persist in our own. Had he utilized more the inter-disciplinary approach the editors promised his analyses of economic problems and of group attitudes might have been richer; so also had he had the scope, which the editors' organization of the series denied him, to merge social and cultural developments with political a synthesis of which he is indisputably capable. And yet Arthur Link's volume is an impressive addition to the written history of the United States. It will stimulate and inform scholars and teachers, and for many years provide their students with extraordinarily profitable reading.

NEW EDITIONS

Old Wine in New Covers

THE revised Arden Shakespeare (Harvard University Press) is proving itself an ideal edition for many readers, from the least instructed to the well informed. Those who need help to understand Shakespeare's vocabulary and allusions will find help generously given in these pages, while those who are interested in textual problems and conjectures will find them competently discussed. The editors have made full use of recent scholarship, their introductions are informative and controversial, the modernized texts have been printed in type that is easily read, and the notes are conveniently placed below the speeches to which they refer. The two plays that have come to me most recently are "Macbeth" ($2.75), edited by Kenneth Muir, and "Titus Andronicus" ($3.85), edited by J. C. Maxwell—the first, one of Shakespeare's greatest; the second so thick with horror and so bloated with bombast, so obviously a prentice job in the school of Marlowe, that many critics have heatedly refused to debit it to Shakespeare's pen. The editor of the old Arden text went to the other extreme, rushing in with praise where others had withdrawn in disgust. Mr. Maxwell, standing on intermediate ground, seeks to establish an early date for the play's composition; calls it "well-planned"; leans towards the conviction that Peele wrote Act I; and, having strained at the gnat of the first act, swallows the rest as Shakespeare's own. He makes one surprising slip in his notes, by the way, when in reference to Act V, Scene 3, line 176, he speaks of Aemilius as "an otherwise mute character."

The Mermaid edition of the plays of Thomas Dekker (reissued by A. W. Wyn) contains his best work, and almost all of his dramatic writing that most of us still care to read—"The Shoemaker's Holiday," "The Honest Whore," "Old Fortunatus," and "The Witch of Edmonton"—but this, of course, is not enough for serious students of Dekker, whose needs include an authoritative text of the entire canon and a textual apparatus prepared with regard to present-day scholarly disciplines. These needs are now beginning to be satisfied for the first time by Fredson Bowers, with his critical edition of "The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker," projected in four volumes, the first of which is now ready, beautifully printed by the Cambridge University Press ($7). Professor Bowers, using collated first editions for his copy-text, has generally respected the original spelling, punctuation, and capitalization, and has held his emendations to a minimum. He has done the same with his textual footnotes and has limited his introductions to succinct accounts of how he has established his texts. Readers who require a glossary and explanatory notes will have to look elsewhere for aid.

IN HIS lively introduction to "Four Plays by Bernard Shaw" (Modern Library, $1.25) Louis Kronenberger compares Shaw to a continent in his spaciousness and variety, and to Niagara Falls in his energy; he likens "Candida" to skim milk masquerading as cream—a judgment I applaud—and declares that Shaw "knew that success in a playwright doesn't rest on knowing how to make characters talk, but on how to make audiences do so." The volume contains "Candida," "Caesar and Cleopatra," "Pygmalion," and "Heartbreak House."

I have had a lot of fun with "Nineteenth Century Plays" (Oxford, World's Classics, $2), edited by George Rowell. Here are ten plays that clicked at the Victorian box-office—plays that have been hard to come by in print. Here are "The Bells," Irving's great standby; Hazlewood's version of "Lady Audley's Secret" ("My fool of a first husband thinks me dead. Oh excellent scheme, oh cunning device, how well you have served me."); "The Ticket-of-Leave Man," with Hawkshaw, the detective; Bulwer-Lytton's "Money," Robertson's "Caste," Grundy's "A Pair of Spectacles," Taylor's and Reade's "Masks and Faces," Jerrold's "Black Ey'd Susan," Albery's "Two Roses," and Boucicault's "The Colleen Bawn." It is always a pleasure to read "The Rivals" and "The School for Scandal," but the pleasure is augmented when one reads them in the large, clear type of the Heritage Press edition ($5), gaily illustrated by René Ben Sussan, introduced by John Mason Brown and Carl Van Doren.

Recommended: "Aristotle on the Art of Fiction," an English translation of the "Poetics," with an introductory essay and explanatory notes by L. G. Potts (Cambridge, $1.25).

—BEN RAY REDMAN.

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The Saturday Review

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Publisher, J. R. COMINSKY Associate Publisher, W. D. PATTERSON
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An Experiment Worth Trying

IT IS inevitable that readers of the less responsible organs of the daily press must feel that this country is constantly confronted with new dangers and dilemmas from which there seems to be at the moment no escape. The majority of the newscasters and columnists who deal with the ebb and flow of national and world politics and economics appear to be ridden by fears of imminent catastrophe. We would soon become a nation of sleepless neurotics if the average man or woman was not endowed with courage, some common sense, and the abiilty to resist the continual assaults against their peace of mind. On the threshold of a new year there seemed to be a concerted effort to discover evil omens from the achievements of the previous twelve months. Although the records should prove to any sensible person that financially, at least, 1953 had been one of the most successful years in U. S. history, millions of words were devoted in our newspapers to threats of a "recession," or even to the beginning of a world-wide depression, as if we must perpetually climb to ever higher levels of national prosperity.

The prophets of doom were equally busy with the Cold War. Nothing in the international scene seems to please them. Last June when the workers' paradise blew up with a loud bang in Eastern Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Poland it was for a brief time impossible to fail to understand its significance or that in the eternal propaganda battle the Soviets had suffered a major defeat. But it was not long before it was turned upside down, and we had something new to worry about. Was it not possible that in the inevitable relaxation of Russia's brutal control over its satellites the peoples of Western Europe might also relax and thus destroy NATO and the will to resist? At the present moment we are now concerned with the fear of a new Russian peace offensive. It is darkly hinted that a totalitarian nation is more dangerous when its hold over its people is weakened, on the theory that its rulers will risk an atomic war rather than face any alteration in the monolithic structure it had created. Instead of being allowed to hope we are plunged into new fears and suspicions.

To be an optimist in these days is to prove oneself a fool. Nevertheless, it may be worthwhile at the beginning of this second month of 1954 to look back to the recent past. There are three years to remember with affection and gratitude: the year of the Truman Doctrine, which restored the liberties of Greece and brought a reinvigorated Turkey into the Western alliance, and the year of the Berlin airlift, a strange phrase to use for a moment in time which may have saved Europe from disaster and all humanity from a third world war (that was the year when Italy and France appeared to be in danger of surrendering to Communism and when Russian armies might have marched unimpeded to the Atlantic Ocean. Looking back now on the despairing political writers and novelists who surveyed the rubble and the stench of the ruined cities of Germany it is not, perhaps, remarkable that not one of them dared to predict that they would soon rise again, or to dream that in less than a decade half of that divided country would produce more goods and coal and food than at any time in its history; nor did anyone conceive that defeated and despairing Italy would have the vitality and the energy to rebuild and restore the nation so rapidly); 1950 is the third year to remember, for by some miracle the Russian delegate was not present at that fateful meeting of the U. N. when with the United States it declared war on North Korea.

We seem to have forgotten the lesson that the long history of wars and disasters should have taught us, that man is endowed not only with courage but with a capacity for regeneration. It is true that the optimist is only too often a fool and that when he is one he can be extremely dangerous. But it is not foolish or vain to hope or to believe that right can or even must prevail.

There is despair in other quarters than the soothsayers of the press, who seem always to be crying "Beware the Ides of March." The top-ranking intellectuals are depressed and at war with what are now known as middle-class intellectuals, with whom the editors of this magazine are not ashamed to be ranked. "The basic relations of cultural power [in the United States] remain unchanged," Mr. Irving Howe gloomily says in a long essay in *Partisan Review*. "The middle-brows continue to dominate. The most distinguished newspaper in this country retains as its music critic a man named Olin Downes; the literary critic of that newspaper is a man named Orville Prescott; the most widely read book reviewer in this country is a buffoon; the most powerful literary journal, read with admiration by many librarians and professors, remains *The Saturday Review* . . ." "Nothing here," he adds, "gives us cause for reassurance or relaxation; nothing gives us reason to dissolve that compact in behalf of critical intransigence known as the *avant garde* . . ."

There are, of course, reasons, however foolish they may seem, for keeping the American public, including highbrows and middlebrows, in a state of constant alarm. It cannot be forgotten that the country was predominantly isolationist only twelve years ago and that when the war ended in victory we enthusiastically disbanded our armed forces, believing that we had nothing more to fear from any prospective enemy. We are not likely to repeat that almost fatal error in this generation at least. We know that we must be strong, and armed to the teeth, and that we must maintain a high level of prosperity. Nevertheless, we might, however timorously, relax through the remainder of the year 1954, assume that we have a right to confidence, and hope in the future. It might be an experiment worth trying. —H. S.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FORMS FOR FORMS

I DON'T KNOW WHERE I'm coming in on this argument, but I certainly can't resist adding my "two-penny worth" to Richard Helder's letter on the current employment mania for "people who like people" and the printed form [*SR* LETTERS, Jan. 9].

I'd worked in Europe ten years before job hunting here and was startled enough to find myself faced with forms asking every question under the sun from "How often do you go to church?" (a reputable publishing firm) to "Do you use narcotics?" (a Long Island newspaper), "What is your race?" (a Virginia newspaper) to "What does your father do?" However, the truly astonishing thing to me is the number of forms that have to be filled in applying to fill a form. For instance, you fill forms at an employment agency to be told that you need a resumé to be sent to the personnel department of an organization which will ask you to fill a form to find out if it needs a resumé.

In reply to an advertisement in the *Times* specifically requesting resumés, I once sent a resumé to what turned out to be a pulp-magazine publishing firm. I received a letter in reply asking me to phone for an appointment, signed by an editor. The appointment was made but when I turned up I was asked to fill forms before seeing the person with whom I had the appointment. When I finally saw her she said what she really needed was a resumé. She didn't remember she had one, nor did she have the faintest idea whom she was interviewing.

I'm told a lot of efficiency experts draw up these forms. It may be a better staff is hired this way. However, most people I know stay in jobs only as long as it suits them and, if it suits them, quit without notice. Employers I've known not only dispense with long-employed services without notice but on occasion when irked by an employe's resignation turn same into dismissal. Does this really improve the sense of security needed on both sides for good stable work? At any rate, it certainly cures anyone with a conscience from showing consideration to employers.

DOROTHY N. S. RUSSELL.

New York, N. Y.

FRUSTRATING ABC's

FRANK DENMAN IN "THE ABC AROUND US" [*SR* Jan. 2] had only a few words to say about the serious problem that foreigners in the U. S. must face when they set out to learn the English language.

I teach English to foreign-born adults and I am well aware of the confusion and discouragement that many of them are encountering.

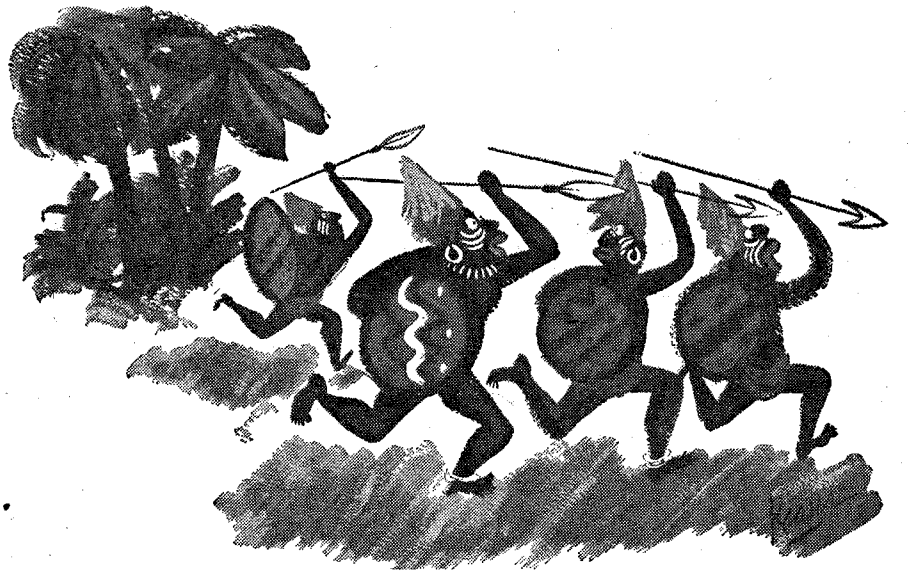
Some of my students are college graduates who may have been journalists, teachers, etc., in their native countries. Here, because of the language difficulty, they are limited to factory jobs which may not be degrading but are certainly frustrating. Unfortunately, many of our native-born Americans are inclined to consider these people as somewhat mentally retarded because they are hesitant and awkward in their speech.

The students who attend these classes are very eager to learn our language—most of them work hard all day and then spend three evenings a week at school. There is no doubt that with the diligence and interest they display progress is made—but how much more could be accomplished if our language did not contain so many irregularities.

Occasionally the students reverse the procedure and try to teach me some of their native expressions and I am considerably impressed with the direct connection between the written and spoken word in almost every language but ours.

ETTA G. BISCHOFF.

New York, N. Y.



"Did you ever stop to wonder what we're fighting for?"

DOUBLES AND TRIPLES

WEDNESDAY EVENING I came home with a book from the public library entitled "Curtain Time" by Ruth Harvey, published by Houghton Mifflin in 1949. The same evening I picked up [*SR* Dec. 5] and read a review of "Curtain Time" by Lloyd Morris, published by Random House.

Who nodded or bloopered? Who stepped on whose toes? I didn't think such a thing could occur! Tell us more, please.

CHARLES L. ARNOLD.

Cincinnati, O.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Titles of books are not copyrighted and so there are countless books with the same title,* i.e., *"The Human Comedy," by Balzac, Saroyan, and James Harvey Robinson; "The Wall," by John Hersey and John Cournos; "Sanctuary," by William Faulkner and Charles M. Crowe; "About Ourselves," by H. A. Overstreet and J. G. Needham; "No Surrender," by Martha Albrand, Emma G. Sterne, and Van Ammers-Kuller; "The Valley of Decision," by Edith Wharton and Marcia Davenport; etc., etc.*

HAMSTRUNG HORSES

AFTER CAREFULLY READING Mr. Rothschild's treatment of the "Horse Thief Menace" [*SR* Nov. 28] I have come to the conclusion that his approach to the problem is hamstrung. The 1875 thief approached the stable with the intention of making away with a perfectly good horse, whereas the 1953 thief approaches the stable with the intention of destroying the animal.

Personally, I like the 1875 thief better. After stealing the animal he intended to ride to greener pastures on a sound steed, whereas the 1953 thief intends to rein in an Augean stable full of dead horses. Yours for sound horses, clean stables, and more articles from horses of a different color.

J. FRED KILPATRICK.

Austin, Tex.

GIVE OR TAKE A MILLION

I AM HAPPY TO CORRECT James L. Van Alstyne's letter entitled "Millions and Billions" [*SR* Dec. 26] regarding my book (and my sister's) "Helen Gould Was My Mother-in-Law."

If Mr. Van Alstyne will look at the introduction to "Helen Gould Was My Mother-in-Law" again he will see that it states that Jay Gould amassed a fortune of over a billion dollars *during his lifetime.* This figure is practically itemized down to the last dime in Gustavus Myer's "History of the Great American Fortunes." One billion may be a gross fortune, but it is not a "gross exaggeration."

What Jay Gould left when he died is another matter. Mr. Van Alstyne is correct when he states that Jay Gould left some eighty-five million.

CLARK ANDREWS.

New York, N. Y.

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BROADWAY POSTSCRIPT

Immortality and the Living

THE NEWEST attraction at the Theatre De Lys is "Bullfight," a voluptuous theatrical fiesta conceived as art. Written by twenty-nine-year-old Leslie Stevens (son of the vice admiral and diplomat who wrote "Russian Assignment"), this play portrays the vivid story of the brothers Salamanca. Born the sons of a proud line of Spanish bullfighters, Domingo and Esteban are each maintaining the family reputation by carrying on in the Mexican bullring. Domingo is a proud, handsome man who believes that the bullfighter's ritual and the fancy *serpentina* and the moment of truth at the kill are not for himself but for the crowd. After an accident in which he is gored by a bull he migrates to the U.S., where he becomes a degenerate and acquires the nickname of "Sunday Boy" because of his activities as a pimp.

The younger brother, Esteban, on the other hand, is less showy and more genuine. He believes in the direct and earthy rewards of marriage to an Indian girl, friendship with the peons who delight in sharing his glory, and performing the finer but less complex *veronica*. However, Esteban worships Domingo.

The play begins when the disabled Domingo returns to Mexico and takes over the Salamanca household. Being handsome, both his brother's wife and her younger sister lust for him. From this point until the climax in the bull-ring basic passions clash and their inevitable thwartings finally achieve the destruction of all four participants.

In one respect this is excellent. "Bullfight" resembles life in that it consists of a series of brightly dancing details that we cannot or do not want to understand. As such it provides wonderfully plastic material for actor, director, and designer. Hurd Hatfield, who has devoted his career to studying acting methods, finds in Domingo a role where he can use them all. While he is a trifle unsure in some of the stronger scenes, he is genuinely moving in his moments of anguish and defeat. Mario Alcalde is warmly convincing as Esteban. Loretta Leversee is feverishly provocative as the virginal but hot-blooded younger sister. Milton Selzer makes a touching humble peon; Robert Jacquin is impressively vulgar as a spitting rowdy; and Tamara Daykarhanova does a solo gypsy bit that diverts (though I wonder if diversion is best for the play at that moment).

Perhaps the performance that best illustrates the virtues and faults of director Joseph Anthony's approach to his material is Vivian Nathan's portrayal of Esteban's wife. Miss Nathan stretches her talents to the point of achieving something more vital than she would be permitted to do in almost any Broadway production, but she also stretches so far as to reveal an insufficiency of physical equipment with which to reach her ambitious goal. But this is exactly the kind of activity the Theatre De Lys should encourage. For while such efforts would be ruinous on Broadway, it is fascinating to those of us interested in theatrical art *per se*. Short of a permanent resident company, these studio performances are the only way in which actors can grow.

Mr. Anthony is to be congratulated not merely for his courage, however. In his first directing assignment he has brought visual poetry to the script. He has been aided by Kim Swados and Peggy Clark, whose scenery and lighting have made startling use of every inch of the De Lys stage facilities. Sloan Simpson's help in the staging of the bullfight scenery has added a flavor of authenticity to the production.

In fact, "Bullfight" is full of so much that is good that one wonders why the sum is not magnificent. That it is not is certainly due to a lack of editing and the inability of Mr. Stevens really to investigate the complexity that lies beneath the surface he has so brilliantly presented. It is perfectly permissible to get lost in the middle of a forest, but not if one only skirts the edge of it.

Still, Mr. Stevens seems a remarkably aware young playwright. He can occasionally come up with such a promising line as "On the best day and in the brightest sun the matador is always a shadow." And, having lived an international life, he avoids American cliches. His play in the hands of Mr. Anthony and a devoted cast is an experience for aficionados.

THE PERPETUATION of legends of heroism from one generation to the next is also causing trouble in Broadway's "The Starcross Story." Diana Morgan's drama previously produced in London under the title of "After My Fashion" deals with an explorer's widow who wishes to augment her husband's immortality by agreeing to a motion picture made on the basis of the reputed story of his life. A monkey wrench is thrown in the works when the explorer's mistress shows up with the shabby truth of the man's life.

For most of the play we are held to the rather artificial story merely by curiosity. Why does Lady Starcross fear Anne Meredith? What is in the hidden letter from Lord Starcross? If these detective-story satisfactions were all there was to "The Starcross Story" it would hardly be worth it.

However, the author adds an interesting question to the last act which makes the whole thing valid. Knowing the falsity of the legend, should the film company compound the forgery? The older generation says "yes." The younger generation says "no." The strong and unscrupulous are lined up against the weak and truthful, and the

The Low Country

By Constance Coyle

THIS land was bought from sea, a sale of force
The costs were paid in lives of clinging men
When storm sustained the cold reclaiming tide.

This land is flat, with none to spare for hills,
Tied down by houses stilting on their piles
And hemmed by dikes that lean against the flood.

This land is worked by men of measured pride
Well tempered by the constant, testing wind
And buoyant, as a race that knows the sea.

This land is built on finely balanced strengths,
Preserved by elemental disciplines
This is not land at all, but earthly will.

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"ORIGINAL and FUNNY." —Atkinson, N. Y. Times
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TOM EWELL in
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A New Comedy by JOHN PATRICK
(Adapted from the Novel by Vern Sneider)
Production Directed by ROBERT LEWIS
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"A DELIGHTFUL EVENING."—Ed Sullivan
JOSHUA LOGAN presents
MARY MARTIN • CHARLES BOYER
in
"Kind Sir"
A New Comedy
by NORMAN KRASNA
with
Dorothy STICKNEY • Margalo GILLMORE • Frank CONROY • Robert ROSS
ALVIN THEA., 250 W. 52 St. Mats. Wed. & Sat.
Eves. Incl. Sun., 8:40—No Perfs. Mon.

"MOST OUTRAGEOUSLY OUTRIGHT FUN OF THE SEASON" —HEWES, SATURDAY REVIEW
FRANCHOT TONE in
oh, men! oh, women!
a COMEDY by
EDWARD CHODOROV
GIG YOUNG • BETSY VON FURSTENBERG
HENRY MILLER'S Thea., 124 W. 43 St. BR 9-3970
Evenings at 8:40. Matinees Thurs. & Sat. at 2:40

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present
PULITZER PRIZE PLAY
PICNIC
DRAMA CRITICS' AWARD
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RALPH MEEKER JANICE RULE
and PEGGY CONKLIN
Staged by JOSHUA LOGAN
Evgs. 8:30. Mon. thru Thurs.: $4.80, 1.80. Fri. & Sat. Evgs.: $6.; 1.80. Mats. Thurs. & Sat. 2:30. $3.60, 1.20. Tax Incl.
MUSIC BOX 239 W. 45 St., N. Y. 36

gentle conflict provides a universal and provocative theme. The accusation that for the younger generation "integrity covers a multitude of negatives" will bear a bit of pondering. But a large helping of validity can also be attributed to the performance of Eva Le Gallienne. While not terribly effective in moments of polite chit chat, she is magnificent as she faces moments of crisis with her incomparable "quiet heart." Anthony Ross, though slightly more overwrought than his material justifies, adds sincerity to a character that might easily be played as a caricature. Mary Astor has just the air to make you believe the almost incredible behavior of the mistress.

"The Starcross Story" closed after one performance because of a plagiarism suit by Stanley Kauffman, author of a novel titled "The Dead Hero" published by Rinehart in 1949.

"HIS and Hers" is a middle-class "Kind Sir." Fay and Michael Kanin's (not to be confused with Garson Kanin, author of "Born Yesterday") inside story of the vicissitudes of a man and ex-wife playwriting team may appeal to those who cultivate an air of Broadway knowingness largely by means of name-dropping. Mentions of "Sardi's, the Algonquin, Cherio's, Chan's, Helen Hayes, house seats, Westport, etc." contribute an air that may be authentic and glamorous, but which only reminds someone in the trade of the incestuousness of the whole Broadway picture.

As a matter of fact, after two acts of such nonsense, in which a divorced author and authoress forced by law to collaborate gradually fall in love with each other again, the Kanins suddenly find a theme. They learn that all the fashionable bickering, the accent on success at any price, is less important than love and integrity. While there is nothing very startling about their discovery, it is the most honest thing the Kanins have to say, and for a moment "His and Hers" assumes a virtue.

Director Michael Gordon and such experienced performers as Celeste Holm, Robert Preston, Elizabeth Patterson, Robert St. John, and Donald McKee have labored patiently and give a certain credibility to a script that is as trivial and unfunny as the nauseously cute towel sets that inspired the title. —HENRY HEWES.

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TV AND RADIO

Heckling the Hucksters

EDWARD L. BERNAYS is a counsel on public relations whose techniques are apparently based on the principle that what is good for the public is good for business in general and consequently for his clients' business. For some time past Mr. Bernays has had the feeling that television commercials are not good for anything or anybody, and he has fired what he calls an "opening gun in a movement to improve [their] quality and effectiveness . . ."

The technique used for the opening gun is the big gun—the impressive, important people whose opinions on TV commercials Mr. Bernays has solicited. Mr. Bernays knows at least as well as anyone else that the commercial will not be altered to conform to the taste of ten or fifty or a hundred college presidents, theologians, political scientists, and labor leaders; but he also knows that what such people say has "social reverberation," that presently women's clubs are saying the same thing, and then Rotary hears of it, and the abstractions of the few become the commonplaces of conversation. The ultimate objective of Mr. Bernays's survey of opinion on TV commercials is to get them improved before they destroy their own value; the immediate purpose of the story he has just released to the press is to set people talking.

Mr. Bernays is rather scrupulous about methods, and he offers his report on the basis of 111 replies to a questionnaire. They came from "a cross-section of businessmen, educators, sociologists, officials of associations of all types, and representatives of other phases of American culture." I gather that a few of these distinguished men and women were not hostile to the present state of the TV commercial, and I confess to a curiosity, which the report doesn't satisfy, as to their reasons. But the major point is made: most of these people, who are makers of opinion as well as individuals with private preferences, abominate the TV commercial.

In a recent (unimportant) bout of illness I saw more than my share of programs and was consequently subjected, beyond the call of duty, to badgering, shouting, wheedling, caressing, and all the other techniques of the TV commercial. During the manic phase of my head cold I shouted back rude comments; during the depressive phase I moaned softly. I wasn't strong enough to get up at the coming of each commercial to turn the volume down; I whimpered when an announcer whispered seductively that if you use a certain shampoo "you feel it . . . you feel it . . . you feel every inch a desirable woman . . ." So I am at the moment in no mood to defend what Mr. Bernays's respondents attack. Yet, as I have serious reservations about the effectiveness of the method, I think I should summarize the objections they raise.

They fall into various categories with some overlaps. One group is purely personal: "terrible" (Dr. Pitrim A. Sorokin); "I have a sense of increasing irritation" (Dr. Ordway Tead); "inexpressible boredom listening to triple repetition" (Alfred H. Barr, Jr.); and, scattered through the report, "bad taste," "lack of dignity," "insulting to the intelligence."

It may appear that I am sneering at these reactions. All I am trying to do is separate different *kinds* of objections to the commercial.

The next group is in the area of social criticism. One of the questions asked was whether the commercials on TV serve "the public interest . . ." Dr. Grayson Kirk, president of Columbia University, says he thinks they do *not* (nor "the best interests of the sponsoring company"); Leo Cherne says that some commercials "are dishonest or misleading"; "demoralizing" and "anti-social" are among the other descriptions.

A third group of complaints could be called simply technical. Rabbi Edward T. Sandrow is "repelled by the approach of 'pitchmen' . . ."; Meyer Levin of the *Newark Star-Ledger* says "advertisers . . . forget that repetition can be overdone . . ."; Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr thinks that sponsors are "subject to the law of diminishing returns. . . ." And there is a general feeling that the commercials are "poorly-timed," "monotonous," and interrupt the mood of the program.

The suggestions for improvement naturally follow: shorter commercials, timed not to interrupt the program violently, with less exaggeration and more intelligence. The sponsors are advised to set up standards and see that these standards are observed.

My doubts of the effectiveness of this criticism are based on experience. When *The Reader's Digest* turned its heaviest batteries against "the pluguglies of radio" it moved only a negligible number of people to endorse its campaign, and there is no evidence that the fatuous commercials of TV are less liked than the few bright and intelligent ones (they do exist). The sales talk is simply not pitched to the critical, and those to whom it is addressed find the kind of criticism quoted above "highbrow," supersensitive, and a trifle insulting.

AM I suggesting that nothing can be done, that we must continue forever to let the air be polluted by near-falsehood pretending to be scientific truth? Or by the kind of commercialism that works back on the content of programs (as in the case of sponsors who will not even consider a program unless it provides for the star to deliver the commercial)? I am no optimist, but I believe that the very process Mr. Bernays has foreseen (the commercials destroying their own effect) may arrive at a midway point where the advertisers and their copywriters will see that a new pitch is desirable. There are a dozen distinguished, factual, honest commercials current (maybe more) and one thing is fundamental about them: the better the product and the more confident the sponsor is of its goodness the more honest the commercial. So that in the long run people may come to associate quality of product with quality of presentation and feel that the closer an announcer comes to the hysterical pitch of the men and women who interrupt midnight movies with double-talk about bargains the closer his product must be to the shoddy and the fake.

In spite of all their researches advertising men do not know the answers to some fundamental questions. In the competitive rat race they often try merely to outdo one another; they cannot often experiment with other people's money. I think in time they will have to.

For their guidance I offer two minute bits of evidence. First, the hard-selling of soap and cigarettes and drugs is now almost all on the single theme: stop using whatever it is you now favor and use our brand instead. This leaves the current user of any brand vulnerable to the seductions of rivals. There isn't enough advertising that confirms the user in his preference, that keeps the sponsor's customers happy. Second, within the past three weeks I have heard a pitch for a toothpaste that contradicts all the basic principles of hard-selling; it says all brands of toothpaste do all the essentials, only our brand is cheaper than the others. Refreshing this is, and I wonder whether it will be successful. —GILBERT SELDES.

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Just Published

MANY of the books described below, which cannot be reviewed in this issue because of limitations of space, will be discussed at greater length in early numbers.

THE COMPLETE AND AUTHENTIC LIFE OF JESSE JAMES. By Carl W. Breihan. Frederick Fell. $4.50. A new life of the legend-ridden gunman who killed scads of people, robbed thousands of dollars, taught hymn singing, and once had every man-jack detective in the country on his trail—with a $10,000 reward as compensation. The author is a sheriff in Missouri, and has spent some twenty years on his researches.

COORINNA. By Erle Wilson. Random House. $2.75. A first novel, by a New South Wales conservationist, about a wolf and his family who live on Tasmania.

FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE THROUGH COMMON STOCKS. By Robert D. Merritt. Simon & Schuster. $3.95. How a layman can build an egg-filled nest by buying and selling common stocks.

LADY INTO WOMAN. By Vera Brittain. The Macmillan Co. $3.25. A light history of the emancipation of women as it has progressed from Queen Victoria's time to the present.

LUCKY JIM. By Kingsley Amis. Doubleday & Co. $3.50. An English novel about an English lecturer in medieval history at an English college.

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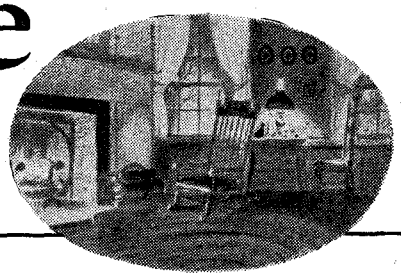

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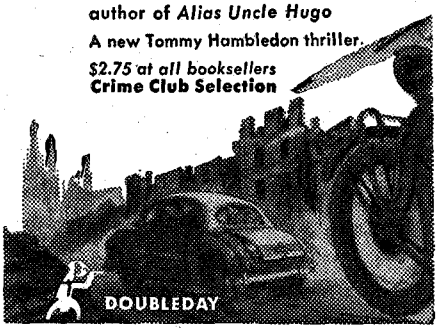

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MUSIC TO MY EARS

Toscanini's "Ballo", Also Munch and Rossi-Lemeni

WHY "Un Ballo?" That was a question that was freely being asked in musical circles prior to the first part of this year's continuation of the opera broadcasts on WNBC under the direction of Arturo Toscanini. And this was one time when the peerless musician could not make black out of white. For all the fact that RCA already has recordings of "Trovatore" and "Rigoletto" (to mention two decidedly logical preferences to "Un Ballo"), and the arguments against "Forza del Destino" based on limitations of radio time, any of these —or "Tosca"—would have given back to him, and to us, more than "Un Ballo" did.

To be sure, this is a prime instance of looking a gift horse in the mouth, but "Un Ballo" is a rather spavined charger at best, and one which does not respond to the Toscanini lash more than moderately. It has its moments, to be sure—more of them in the acts to come than in those that have now been heard—but the fundamental human emotions that stirred Verdi to such great outbursts of powerful writing as may be found in the earlier "Traviata," "Rigoletto," and "Trovatore" (not to mention the barely known "Macbeth" and the first version of "Simon Boccanegra") are not in this manufactured subject.

For that matter, the element of credibility was not enhanced by the foolish script Ben Grauer was given to deliver, verbally, about "the Governor of Boston" and "the sailors Samuel and Tomasso." Certainly there is no reason at this point to bend the knee to the censorship of nearly a hundred years ago that produced this witless shift of locale, especially when no scenery is involved, merely the choice of one word or another.

Beyond Toscanini's compelling direction and the splendid playing of the orchestra, the most noteworthy work was done by a little man who was not supposed to be there—Jan Peerce. As a replacement for the ailing Jussi Bjoerling, Peerce reminded us of his many fine performances of the part at the Metropolitan, of his richly textured way of curving a Verdian line, of his responsibility as an artist and his sensitivity as a vocalist. He was, in other words, very good. Robert Merrill tends to make a purple sound where merely a magenta one would do, but he may be expected to have his opportunity next week, as will Herva Nelli, who sang her brief portion this time very well indeed. However, Claramae Turner's Ulrica was spotty in vocal strength and not the kind of coloration wanted, such as one has heard from Cloe Elmo. As for Virginia Haskins, Oscar can use more vocal sparkle than she provided, though it was commendable enough. As usual, the Shaw Chorale was excellent.

TO judge from the symphony introduced by Charles Munch on a recent visit with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Henri Dutilleux is a new name of some consequence in the current atmosphere of French composition. A *Prix de Rome* winner in 1938 (*Grand Prix*, incidentally), Dutilleux lost at least a decade of prominence because of the war. Thus, at thirty-eight (he was born in 1916) he is coming into the kind of notice that would have been appropriate in normal times for a man in his late twenties. This symphony was completed in 1951, and first played in a Cologne festival of 1953 under the direction of Ferenc Fricsay.

All this data is pertinent, for the work has to be apprehended in some framework of time, influence, and development to be reasonably evaluated. Dutilleux strikes me as having a symphonic feeling—in the sense that Shostakovich and Prokofiev have it, and most of our Americans do not—even though his absorption in this work is more with procedure than content. Thus, a first movement "passacaglia" which moves into a scherzo, followed by a slow movement which gives way to a dissonant-beginning finale which dissolves, eventually into consonance, is a neat ground-plan for a symphony, even if Dutilleux has not quite filled it. Almost any isolated page or sequence of measures bespeaks a musical mind at work, but the total left me unconvinced. At the same time, the effort was so consistently on a high level of purpose as to mark Dutilleux for attentive listening on any future occasion when his name is encountered. Certainly he can handle an orchestra, even as big a one as is utilized in this symphony.

"Boris" has returned to the Metropolitan stage, bringing with it the first appearance of Nicola Rossi-Lemeni in the title role. It was given, of course, in English, which means that this artist, who has sung it in both Russian and Italian, was at more than a slight disadvantage. Mingling with his accent were those of Salvatore Baccaloni as Varlaam and Hertha Glaz as the Inn-keeper, with a result that one was sometimes uncertain as to whether what one was hearing was Boris Godunoff or Boris Goldovsky.

In its large aspects Rossi-Lemeni's performance had many excellent traits —a fine frame for the part, regal raiment and tsarish make-up, a bearing that was suitable from first to last, and a carefully detailed pattern of action. Appropriately, it reached its climax in the scene of Boris's death, with a final tableau that was effective without being stagy.

Vocally, however, the total evidence (after his Mephistopheles and his Don Giovanni) would indicate either that Rossi-Lemeni is not in good voice this season or that he doesn't project enough tone for the Met's auditorium. When he makes a maximum effort he can be heard well enough, but that happens only intermittently and he does not seem able to sustain his production sufficiently to avoid the impression of fatigue and tonal lapse in between. As is well known, vocal audibility has little to do with the *size* of the sound; it depends on purity, and Rossi-Lemeni's general production is too rough, growly, and unfocused to make a proper effect. This is really regrettable, for he is an intelligent artist and a thoroughgoing craftsman.

In large part this "Boris" was much as it was last season, meaning that Fritz Stiedry did not give the kind of commanding force wanted in "Boris" (some climaxes were powerfully developed, but they were the exception). However, the chorus work was good, and Blanche Thebom provided a needed lift with her excellent art (she has apparently recovered from her late season vocal debility of last year) in the Polish scene as Marina. Charles Kullmann was a decided improvement on his predecessor as Schuisky, and Norman Scott did some of the best work yet to his credit as Pimenn, likewise Clifford Harvuot as Rangoni. The roll-call of able elements would also include Mildred Miller as the Czarevitch, Jean Madeira as the Nurse, and Arthur Budney as the Secretary of the Duma. However, "Boris" is at best a fragmentary work which requires a strong and steady pulse from beginning to end to give it continuity. Whatever else he provided in detail or clarity, Stiedry did not provide this.

—IRVING KOLODIN.

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Post-Stalin Ferment

Continued from page 10

this longing for "bold" plays remains unsatisfied.

A report on an All-Union Conference of Young Critics, published in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* last October 3, conveys the atmosphere of the past year better than do these scattered expressions of opinion. The conference was held in Moscow in the early fall, and representatives of a great many different nationalities, from all the parts of the Soviet Union, took part.

Konstantin Paustovski, a popular Soviet writer who is also known abroad, spoke on "The High Calling": "There is a fine old word which we have begun to forget—the 'calling.' It should be revived, for criticism and writing constitute a *high calling*. They are a line of work whose business is life. We must, at long last, declare war on the craft attitude in both literature and criticism. . . . We must approach each writer as an integral phenomenon and proceed from the assumption of his creative individuality in our own writings." Only by drawing inspiration from these long-forgotten words, said Paustovski, would it be possible to overcome the "grayness and tedium" characteristic of so many current works.

"All is not well in our poetry," lamented the poet Vera Inber in her address to the conference. "We must discuss it frankly. The readers have become indifferent to us. Many of our books lie on the bookstore shelves." Nor are the books taken out of libraries. Often reader criticisms are heard that contemporary poets "crib" from one another: "The same steam-shovel, the same dam, the same road." Another enemy lying in wait for writers and critics is vulgarization of ideas. As an illustration, Vera Inber told an anecdote about the critic who said, in an analysis of lullabies, "In a bourgeois society, a lullaby puts the child to sleep, but in ours it must rouse him." An interesting part of Vera Inber's speech was that devoted to the poem by Tvardovski mentioned above. She had liked the poem very much, but had heard several comments on it which pained her deeply: critics too often wrote about Soviet poets as though they were facing "an enemy on the other side of the literary barricades."

Another speaker, the literary critic A. Tarasenkov, advocated a return to controversy: "We have lost our taste for controversies, for discussions; many of us forget that the truth is born in controversy, in the clash of opinions."

Especially interesting was the speech by a motion-picture director, M. Papava, devoted to "The Subject and Its Embodiment." In one of the small movie theatres in the outskirts of Moscow, Papava had been drawn into conversation with another member of the audience—a locksmith by trade and an avid movie fan. The man had said to him: "We have big, interesting films, and everything is properly presented, but they don't make you laugh and cry." Papava correctly deciphered the locksmith's words: he was complaining of the emotional poverty of Soviet films. This emotional poverty is also characteristic of other areas of contemporary Soviet art where all too often "the theme takes precedence over its artistic execution." And the articles of Soviet critics reminded Papava of "a strange sort of crawl stroke. The writer, as it were, does not risk expressing his personal attitude toward the problem, so he swims a crawl: the head is almost constantly under water, the writer is buried somewhere under the subject, and only from time to time does a hand emerge clutching a quotation—now the right one, now the left one. . . ." [Also relevant at this point is the recent article by the Soviet composer Aram Khachaturian, which is discussed elsewhere in this issue (page 37) by Nicolas Slonimsky.]

ALL these fragments of literary "plain talk" during the past year are, as it were, bound together by Ilya

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. "Satan in the Suburbs" by Bertrand Russell. 2. "Kiss Me Again, Stranger" by Daphne du Maurier. 3. "Shandygaff" by Christopher Morley. 4. "Caravan" by John Galsworthy. 5. "Winesburg, Ohio" by Sherwood Anderson. 6. "The Four Million" by O. Henry. 7. "Moonbeams From the Larger Lunacy" by Stephen Leacock. 8. "Seven Gothic Tales" by Isak Dinesen. 9. "Just So Stories" by Rudyard Kipling. 10. "The Touch of Nutmeg" by John Collier. 11. "From Death to Morning" by Thomas Wolfe. 12. "After Such Pleasures" by Dorothy Parker. 13. "Droll Stories" by Honoré de Balzac. 14. "Earthly Creatures" by Charles Jackson. 15. "The Trembling of a Leaf" by Somerset Maugham. 16. "Decameron" by Giovanni Boccaccio. 17. "We Are the Living" by Erskine Caldwell. 18. "These Thirteen" by William Faulkner. 19. "The Honeyed Peace" by Martha Gellhorn. 20. "Dubliners" by James Joyce.

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Ehrenburg's long, and at times brilliant, article in *Znamya*. Ehrenburg starts by telling of a letter he had received not long before from a young Leningrad engineer. His correspondent had asked why contemporary creative writing was "paler than life." Soviet society was advanced by comparison with Czarist Russia "but the classical authors wrote better." Reading contemporary *belles-lettres*, you often asked yourself: "Why was this written? Everything seems to be there, and yet something is missing; the book does not stir the heart, and people are not shown as they really are."

In contrast to many writers who are fond of giving evasive answers in such cases, Ehrenburg decided this time to tackle the heart of the matter. He recalled how, at the first Congress of Soviet Writers in 1934, a young female worker from the Trekhgornaya mill had criticized the writers for having never depicted textile workers in their books. Since that time a great many books had been written on the life of Soviet textile workers, but these were not the ones in demand in textile-factory libraries. Rather, the present-day female textile worker "weeps over the torments of Anna Karenina" and "understands both the defenselessness of the loving heart and the power of motherhood." She reads Tolstoy's novel not only in order "to acquaint herself with the mores of a dead society but also in order to understand the complexity of living human emotions." And in contemporary works describing textile workers she does not find any answers to what is inwardly troubling her, for they portray "not people but weaving-looms, not human emotions but production processes."

One reason for the prolonged success of the classics is that it was easier for the older authors to write than for those of today: "They described a society which was changing extremely slowly. . . . Our society is being built before our very eyes. Many books by successful authors (and not old ones, either) were once very timely and, without losing their artistic merits, have become historical. During the intervening decades not only people changed . . . but even feelings which had seemed unchangeable. . . . Neither Leo Tolstoy nor Turgenev nor Goncharov nor Chekhov had to contend with all these difficulties." Troubles such as these beset not only Soviet writers, but many Western writers as well. The latter's task is apparently simple: "to portray a world that is decrepit but still in existence. In the period between the First and Second World Wars great writers of the last century were still producing excellent works." Among these Ehrenburg includes not only Romain Rolland, Bernard Shaw, Knut Hamsun, and H. G. Wells, but also the early books of Hemingway, Caldwell, Steinbeck, and Faulkner. He also praises some writers of "bourgeois Europe" who had fallen into disfavor with Soviet critics, such as Jules Romains, James Joyce, and François Mauriac. To be sure, Ehrenburg's praise applies only to their works written in the interval between the two wars. These writers realized at that time that their society was doomed, but they still enjoyed that "tranquility" so necessary for creativity. Now they no longer have it: "It is difficult to plan a novel when a friend tells you that the atomic bomb will fall within a year." Ehrenburg does not seem to notice that he is unwittingly linking the young writers of the "bourgeois world" with Soviet writers. It is "difficult" for the latter to write because their society is changing too rapidly, and "difficult" for the former because they have no "tomorrow." But, one way or the other, both are creatively handicapped.

The "coldness" which the Leningrad engineer felt in Soviet literary works Ehrenburg explains by the fact that too much space is devoted to describing all sorts of "production processes." People can learn more and better about any one of these from specialists in the various sectors of the economy than from creative writers. There is only one area in which the writer must be better versed than his fellow citizens and contemporaries—"that is the inner world of a human being."

Especially noteworthy is the manner in which some of Ehrenburg's ideas parallel those of Konstantin Paustovski at the All-Union Conference of Young Critics. Ehrenburg, like Paustovski, proposes reviving certain words which had virtually disappeared from circulation: "calling, inspiration, devotion. Truly, these words are not ridiculous and empty; they reflect true understanding of the duty of a writer—a man who must live a multitude of lives in one short life, who must warm people's hearts and himself be aflame. . . ."

SEVERAL times in his article Ehrenburg returns to the idea that the writer is a creator and "not an instrument that mechanically records events. A writer writes a book not because he knows how to write, not because he is a member of the Writers Union and might be asked why he hasn't published anything for so long. . . . A writer writes a book because he has something that is his own which he must say to people, because the book is burning inside him like a fever, because he has seen people and things and emotions which he must describe. That is how impassioned books are born; and even if they at times contain artistic defects such books stir the readers."

Ehrenburg also feels that "the characters in a creative work cannot be subordinated to a plot marked out by the author. . . . I would say that the heroes of a book are, to a certain extent, independent of the author's will. He must take their character into account and cannot dictate to them how they must act." Critics are wrong when they demand that writers correct their heroes' weaknesses. "Do critics think," exclaims Ehrenburg, "that writers are simpletons and political ignoramuses who are unaware that their heroes make mistakes?" These mistakes must be corrected, however, not by the writers but by the environment and the society in which the prototypes of these heroes live. A writer cannot correct the life of his heroes "the way a proofreader corrects the proofs of a book." A writer's creativity is akin to the birth of a child: "Every mother knows what it means to bear a child. Leo Tolstoy understood this and described it magnificently." "I do not know," Ehren-

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A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 554 will be found in the next issue.

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Answer to Literary Crypt No. 553

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burg remarks sarcastically, "whether all our critics understand it."

A writer's place "is not in the rear-guard" of his era, according to Ehrenburg. A writer resembles more a scout than he does a headquarters clerk: "He does not copy, does not expound; he discovers."

Ehrenburg ends his article by acknowledging that he hesitated a long time before deciding to publish it. But he overcame his hesitation, convinced that the demands of the Leningrad engineer and of millions of others could be satisfied only by literary works that were "steeped in emotion," for these alone could be "the emotional cement of society." Such books "cannot be ordered or planned"; they can only be created. "Can one conceive of ordering Tolstoy to write 'Anna Karenina' or ordering Gorki to write 'Mother'?"

At the beginning of this article, I noted that the longing for "plain talk" revealed during the past year somehow reminded one of the mood that prevailed in the Soviet Union in 1945-1946. That mood sprang from a vague feeling that the country had reached some sort of watershed, that "it was impossible to go on living that way," that the victorious conclusion of the war, which had demanded such self-sacrifice and national enthusiasm, must lead to some sort of profound changes in the entire system of Communist dictatorship. These sentiments were crushed by the purge of 1946-1948. However, they had evidently begun to revive in the last months of Stalin's life and asserted themselves especially strongly after his death. The recent overt statements about "truthfulness" and "frankness" in literature and about greater inner freedom for writers are only an expression of the deep yearning for fundamental changes.

What is particularly astonishing, however, is Ehrenburg's intervention in this discussion. In recent years he has become the Kremlin's chief literary mouthpiece in its efforts, both at home and—especially—abroad, to give Soviet aggression the appearance of a "struggle for peace." In this role he has developed a unique talent for exploiting the longing of millions of people for peace and freedom as a means of concealing Soviet brutality and aggression. Therefore, when Ehrenburg comes forward in the name of "truthfulness," "passion," and "humanity" in literature one cannot help being a little suspicious. Might it not be an attempt by the Soviet Government to channelize the popular longing for "plain talk," to bring it under official control and, so far as possible, render it harmless?

(Translated from the Russian by Louis Jay Herman.)

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(Continued on page 34)

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PERSONALS

(Continued from page 33)

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By Doris Nash Wortman

DEFINITIONS

A. Inadvertent omission of a letter, syllable, etc., in writing.

B. A sort of Oligocene rhinoceros, whose remains are found in central Asia.

C. What a finance company must do to a car, tractor, refrigerator, etc., in certain regrettable circumstances.

D. "De profundis" (4 wds.).

E. Any small fish of the genus *Umbra*, allied to the pickerel family (2 wds.).

F. Next year (comp.).

G. To set up.

H. Follow as a consequence.

I. Medicinal wash.

J. What a brother may spare.

K. Electrical device for converting sound vibrations into light.

L. Sea horses and pipefishes belong to this order.

WORDS

166 43 107 184 141 196 151 33 168 55

13 137 74 190 81 108 46 96 31 132

21 145 3 180

164 34 20 124 111 91 136 193 105

179 10 183 80 29 30 175 71 61 18

100 152 1 24

51 114 182 83 149 159 140 142 39

143 102 127 48 201 118 89 131 75

117 160 4 15 25 189 59 194 90

45 113 172 85 63

103 28 122 197 82 47

12 110 135 195

167 129 104 76 2 70 8 35 79 14

60 26 174 97 106 62 133 112 157 144

53 153 87

DEFINITIONS

M. Small calcareous body often used to help remove a foreign body from the eye.

N. Familiar English corruption of the Mohammedan warcry (3 wds.).

O. A plant's new growth.

P. Acknowledge some offense and express regret therefor.

Q. Highest or culminating point.

R. Dull sound as of striking with or against a soft substance.

S. Describing a Mass not corresponding to the Divine Office for the day, used for some special reason.

T. Girl in three popular songs, who was (1) "gentle," (2) "bonny," and (3) left no forwarding address.

U. Large fish-eating bird which can dodge a bullet.

V. Familiar way of referring to such a place as Kalaupapa Settlement (2 wds.).

W. In a manner widespread, far-reaching.

X. What Plato's ill-adjusted man finds "of equal burden" with age.

WORDS

50 134 185 7 128 173 66 32

156 64 198 92 16 139 116 191 148 11

161 40

23 101 171 178 68 56

121 73 58 192 95 67 169 150 181

155 126 9 93 200 123 84 187

78 57 163 177

44 41 162 147 186 98

165 27 86 119 5

37 69 65 125

42 17 36 22 99 120 154 170 77 188

94

54 19 88 38 138 6 199 146 130 115

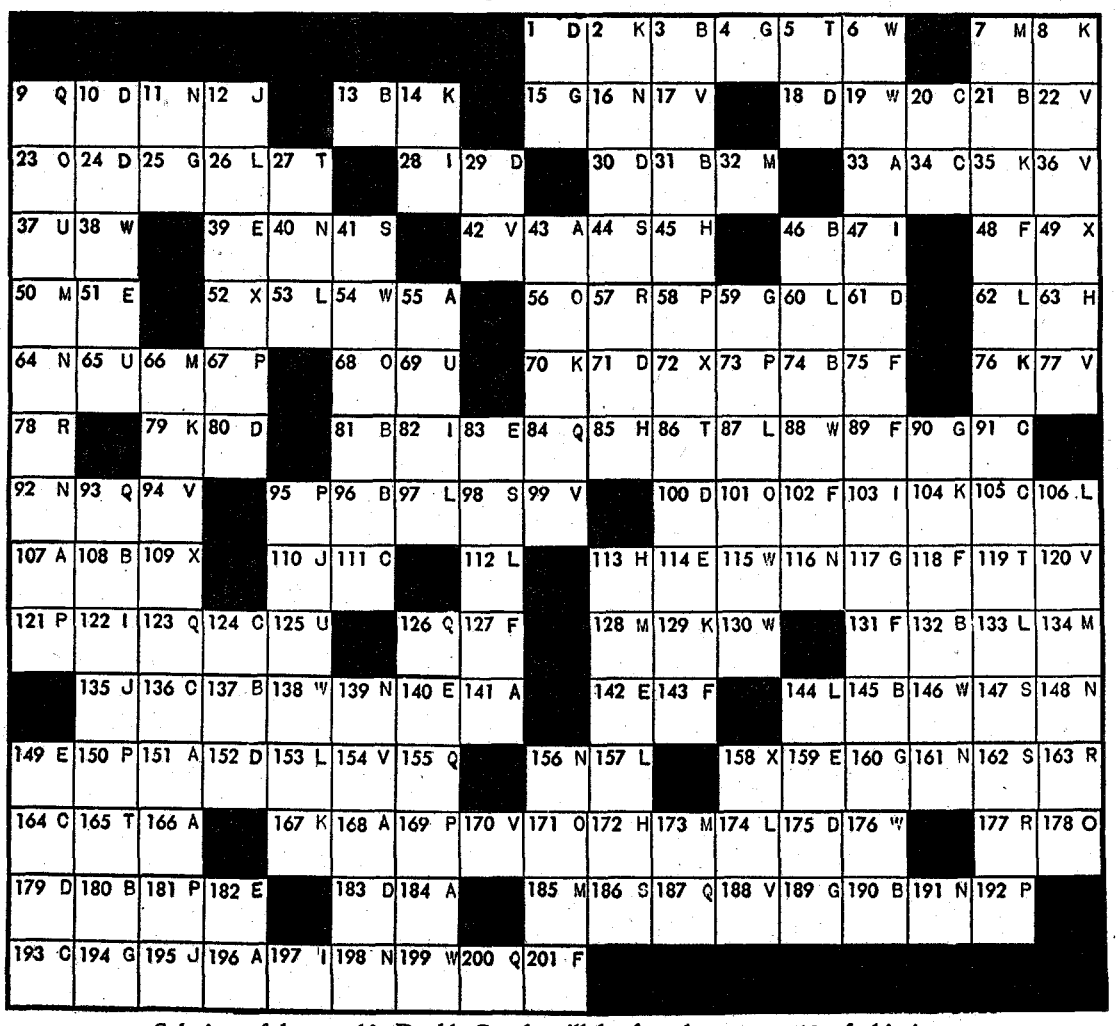
176

109 72 158 52 49

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd WORDS, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. Alongside each definition, there is a row of dashes—one for each letter in the required word. When you have guessed a word, write it on the dashes, and also write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. . . When the squares are all filled in, you will find that you have completed a quotation from some published work. If read up and down, the letters in the diagram have no meaning. . . Black squares indicate ends of words; if there is no black square at the right side of the diagram, the word carries over to the next line. . . When all the WORDS are filled in, their initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Of great help to the solver are this acrostic feature and the relative shapes of words in the diagram as they develop.

Authority for spellings and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary, Second Edition.



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 18 of this issue.

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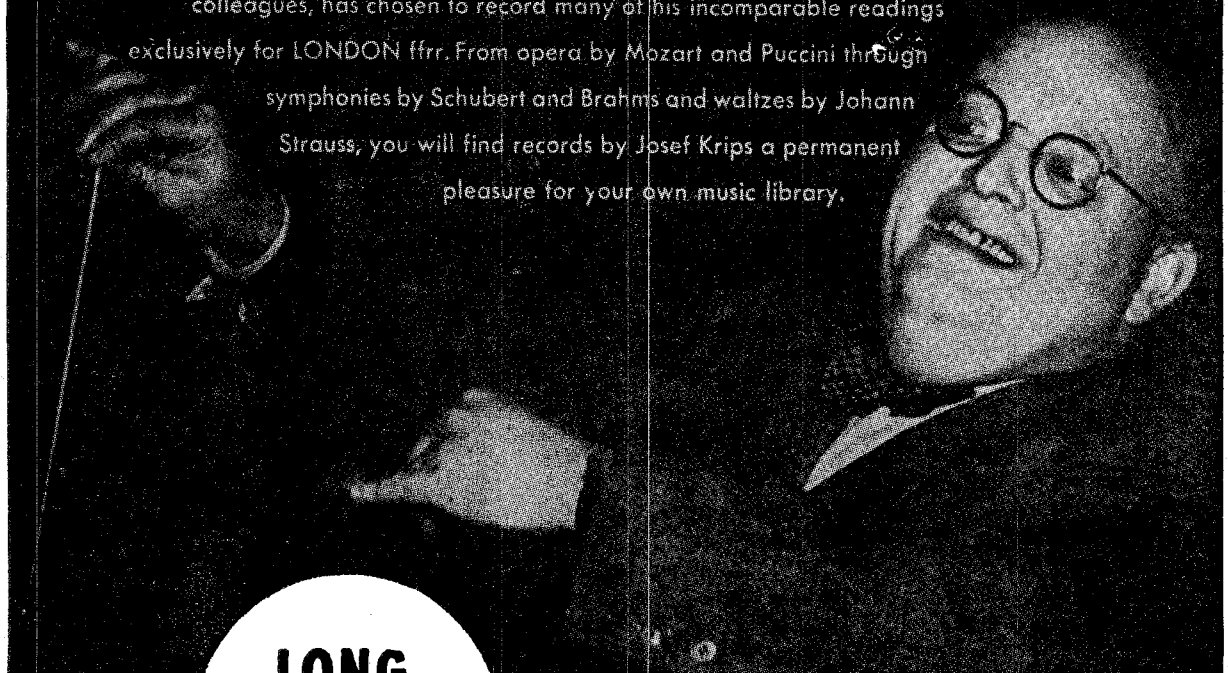

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REQUIEM MASS (Mozart) (K. 526)
***LS-230/1

SYMPHONY No. 31 IN D MAJOR "Paris" (Mozart)

SYMPHONY No. 39 IN E FLAT MAJOR (Mozart)
**LL-542

SYMPHONY No. 9 IN C MAJOR "Great" (Schubert)
*LL-619

SYMPHONY No. 40 IN G MINOR (Mozart) (K. 550)

SYMPHONY No. 92 IN G MAJOR "Oxford" (Haydn)
**LL-780

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***with The London Symphony Orchestra*
****with The Vienna Hofmusikkappele*

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SR/ RECORDINGS SECTION

CONTENTS

A New Tune in Soviet Music
By Nicolas Slonimsky 37

Sir Huon and Czar Peter
By Herbert Weinstock 40

Cherubini, Schmitt, Fauré
By Roland Gelatt 42

Hits and Misses
By Wilder Hobson 44

Boult's Musical Britannia
By Irving Kolodin 46

An Unworked Italian Lode
By Paul Henry Lang 48

Recordings in Review 50

Recordings Reports: Classical LP's 52

"English Suites" in Tandem
By Putnam Aldrich 53

Callas, Tebaldi, Favero 54

Spotlight on the Moderns
By Arthur Berger 56

Vocal Art from Aksel to Zinka
By the Editor 58

The Other Side
By Thomas Heinitz 60

Pop Roundup
By Bill Simon 65

Letters to the Recordings Editor 66

—*From* Sovietskaya Musica.

"Rubber Stamp Composer," sitting on "Blueprint for Symphony No. 2," types an "Inter-office Memorandum."

A New Tune in Soviet Music

By NICOLAS SLONIMSKY

AFTER six long years of squirming under the oppressive esthetic decrees formulated by the late Andrei Zhdanov, Soviet composers are beginning to show signs of real independence. Zhdanov's notorious *obiter dicta* were embodied in a Resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party, dated February 10, 1948, and for a long time they effectively influenced all musical composition in the USSR. Recently, however, Soviet musicians have dared to question the Zhdanov esthetics. Now comes the most forthright declaration of independence to date in the form of a direct attack on the Zhdanov policies by Aram Khachaturian, in his article "On Creative Boldness and Inspiration," conspicuously featured in the November 1953 issue of *Sovietskaya Musica*.

Khachaturian was one of the Soviet composers named in the 1948 Resolution as an adherent to a "formalistic and anti-national movement" which practised "atonality, dissonance, disharmony, and neuropathological conglomerations of sound which transform music into cacophony." Furthermore, Khachaturian was specifically accused of negligence as head of the Steering Committee of the Union of Soviet Composers.

In his article, Khachaturian is careful to avoid an appearance of retrospective self-justification. He loyally quotes Zhdanov's words: "The new must be better than the old, or else it has no meaning." And he seemingly reiterates his faith in the correctness of the musical policy of the 1948 decree. The fire of his article is concentrated on the two hapless institutions that were entrusted with carrying out the Zhdanov policies: the Union of Soviet Composers and the Committee of Fine Arts. To the functionaries of these organizations Khachaturian throws his challenge: "J'accuse!" The charges are administrative bureaucracy, obsequiousness, timidity, mediocrity, and lack of imagination.

Khachaturian's solution of the problem is simple: let composers write music as they please. This, of course,

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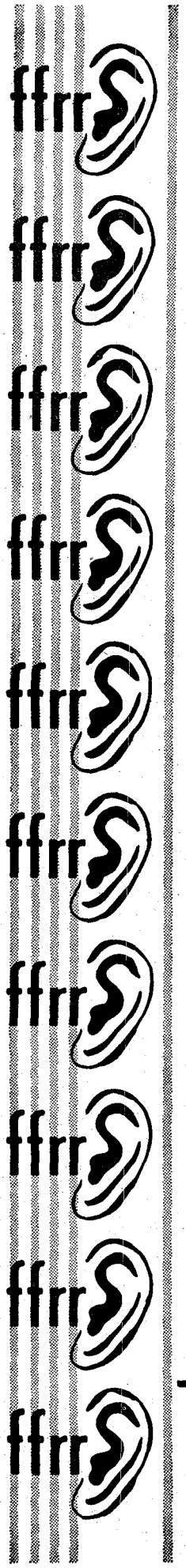

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Moussorgsky

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Verdi

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Franz Holatchek, piano
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effectively cancels all ideological controls established over Soviet music by Zhdanov. Ostensibly attacking the executive branch, Khachaturian defies the central idea that composers must be "told" what to compose and how to compose. Considering the atmosphere of Soviet music since 1948, this is a revolutionary proposal.

Like all revolutions, big and little, political and artistic, the musical revolt in Moscow did not arrive all of a sudden. The notion that Stalin's death released liberal ideas in Soviet music (as it may have done in other arts) is not supported by a careful reading of the Soviet musical press. In fact, every point raised by Khachaturian, had been anticipated in editorials or special articles published in the same journal, *Sovietskaya Musica*, before Stalin's death in March 1953.

In the article "On Musical Mastery" (March 1952), Kabalevsky warned the Union of Soviet Composers not to confuse solid technique of composition with formalism and not to tolerate the lowering of technical requirements under the pretext of fighting formalistic tendencies. In a statement published in the November 1952 issue of the magazine, Shostakovich questioned the absolute prohibition of dissonances: "Life constantly brings on new problems and demands creative innovation from Soviet musicians . . . If the subject of a certain work requires a strong dissonance at a given moment, the listener will accept it as just."

In three consecutive editorials (January, February, and March 1953), *Sovietskaya Musica* attacked the growing bureaucracy of the post-1948 musical organizations. In the first of these it stated: "We can no longer ignore the fact that many musical works produced during the last few years are stillborn. The complacent leadership of the Union of Soviet Composers and those among our music scholars who are willing to condone the poor artistic quality of these works because of the 'actuality' of their subject matter and the 'good intentions' of the composer render a bear's service to Soviet music." (A bear's service is an act of officious stupidity, from Krylov's fable in which the bear, guarding his owner's sleep, drops a huge rock on his forehead to kill an annoying fly.)

From the February 1953 issue: "Unfortunately, the Committee of Fine Arts and the Union of Soviet Composers have not yet overcome the bureaucratic methods of creative guidance. Noisy sessions with plenty of commotion on petty subjects create an illusion of feverish activity . . . For a year the opera committee of the Union of Soviet Composers has been compiling and discussing with wearisome monotony a long list of some sixty titles of Soviet operas. Yet the members of the opera committee, headed by the secretary of the Union of Soviet Composers, Dmitri Kabalevsky, know only too well that most of these operas are non-existent and are used only for accounting purposes."

In October 1953 *Sovietskaya Musica* published a cartoon (see page 37) representing a Soviet composer typing out his music on a rubber-stamp machine. A poem accompanied the drawing:

He's a composer, and his
inspiration
Had brought him universal
admiration
And won some prizes from the
grateful nation.

But now he's left sonatas to
the dead
And writes his notes with
rubber-stamps instead,
Indexed and filed in blue and
green and red.

His present musical preoccupation
Is simply bureaucratic compilation.

KHACHATURIAN'S article, which appeared in the next issue of *Sovietskaya Musica*, was a dialectical summation of the cartoon and the poem ridiculing the new figure of "composer-bureaucrat." Clearly, it was not published as a personal expression. When such debatable views are aired in the Soviet press the editors usually protect themselves by inserting a meaningful footnote: "This article is published in the order of discussion." No such footnote accompanies the Khachaturian article. It is therefore to be assumed that the article is a policy-making one.

Like most Soviet musicians, Khachaturian writes fluently and easily. But Soviet prose in general is marked by repetitiousness, superabundance of clichés, and various redundancies that make the reading pretty turgid in the original, and stultifying in complete translation. The Khachaturian article possesses all these qualities, of which the following paragraph, in a fairly literal translation, is a sample:

> TO SATISFY IN EVERY WAY THE CONSTANTLY INCREASING SPIRITUAL DEMANDS OF THE PEOPLE—This lofty objective, which constitutes an integral part of the basic law of Socialism, is erroneously interpreted at times by some musical personalities, acting from the position of thoughtless "adaptationism." Not a few works have been produced here, calculated to satisfy some "arithmetical mean" of public taste, works in which the composer, having lost his creative individuality, camouflages himself behind gray, shopworn musical phraseology . . . But the people reject second-hand merchandise. They demand from us an art that is new, fresh, beautiful, attractive, and inspired.

"Adaptationism" is the nearest possible translation of the Russian word *Prisposoblentchestvo*, the suffix *tchestvo* representing "ism" in many Russian neologisms. The meaning of the word is "an obsequious and insincere effort to adjust oneself to the

(*Continued on page* 62)

—*Sovfoto.*

Aram Khachaturian—"declaration of independence."

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Sir Huon and Czar Peter

By HERBERT WEINSTOCK

ON April 12, 1826, London heard the first performance of "Oberon," a new opera by Carl Maria von Weber. This was both his first composition to an English text and the last of his operas, for he died in London on June 6. The English libretto of "Oberon," by James Robinson Planché, an antiquarian specializing in heraldry and costumes, was almost certainly the worst text ever handed to and accepted by a serious composer. To describe it briefly is impossible, but a list of its characters is sufficiently indicative. The singing protagonists are Sir Huon de Bordeaux, Duke of Guienne (tenor); Sherasmin, his squire (baritone); Oberon, King of the Fairies (tenor); Rezia, daughter of Haroun-el-Raschid, Caliph of Bagdad (soprano); Fatima, her attendant (mezzo); Puck (mezzo); and two mermaids (mezzos). There are also choruses of fairies, ladies, knights, slaves, and others—and five speaking actors: Haroun-el-Raschid; Babekan, a Saracen prince; Almanzor, Emir of Tunis; Roshana, Almanzor's wife; and Abdallah, a corsair.

Weber, hard pressed by sickness and lack of money, had agreed to the proposal of Charles Kemble, lessee of Covent Garden, that he make an opera of this farrago. He did not fully carry out his promise, for "Oberon" in reality is a fantasy with incidental music, most of it sung. In his mind, however, he kept a plan to have the libretto translated into German in such a way as to make "Oberon" over into a grand opera without spoken dialogue. Death prevented his carrying out this dubious intention (for there is almost no possibility that a viable grand opera could have resulted). When "Oberon" has been performed in Germany, it has most often been in a somewhat edited literal translation of Planché's nonsensical adaptation of William Sotheby's translation of Christoph Martin Wieland's fantastic poem. (It was on Wieland's equally fantastic "Dschinnistan" that the text of Mozart's "Die Zauberflöte" had been based.) The few times that "Oberon" has been sung in English since its thirty-one hearings in 1826, it has most often been in cut versions of the Planché-Weber original. We now have a recording (Period SPL 575, $11.90) that is neither.

The language of this performance is German, but the spoken dialogue has been omitted, its absence reducing the bird-brained story to dizzy incomprehensibility. Even musically the recording is incomplete. An orchestral entrance for Rezia, Fatima, and female harem slaves and some fine background music for the descent of Oberon in a swan-drawn car are missing. Sir Huon's rondo-aria "I revel in hope" has been left out of Act III. Most unfortunately, too, his beautiful recitative and aria, "Oh, 'tis a glorious sight," have been deleted from Act I, their place being given to his Act II aria "From boyhood trained"—which excision and transfer confound present meaninglessness by destroying what little continuity might have survived.

"Oberon" is performed here by the Chorus and Symphony Orchestra of Suddeutscher Rundfunk under the direction of Hans Mueller-Kray, with soloists of inferior abilities. Helene Bader as Rezia chokes and gasps through the opera's greatest pages after the overture: Rezia's tremendous "Ocean, thou mighty monster!" Karl Liebl as Sir Huon does reasonably well the wrong things he has been asked to do, but Franz Fehringer as Oberon alone demonstrates the abilities essential to singing a leading role in a Weber opera. The orchestra plays handsomely, giving the overture the best performance any part of the opera receives. To have any recording of "Oberon" is interesting, but to mistake this one for more than a distant approximation of what is in the score would be to wrong once more the long-suffering Weber.

FAR better in every detail except the original quality of the music involved is an all-but-complete recording of the ever-fresh and eternally popular comic opera "Zar und Zimmermann" (Decca DX 129, $11.70), by Gustav Albert Lortzing (1801-51). In respect of authenticity of style, vivacity of performance, recording (by Deutsche Grammophon), and presentation, this excellent production might be taken as a model for operatic recordings. The physical package is a delight to behold—and does not belie its contents. Under the knowing direction of Ferdinand Leitner, and with the chorus and orchestra of the Württemberg State Theatre, a group of delightful light-opera singers does every justice to Lortzing's *singspiel*. The spoken dialogue has been kept, so expertly abridged as to keep the story-line intact. Both the German text and a readable translation into English are supplied in a handsome brochure.

The itching fingers of some editor have removed two sections of the score: the Czar's recitative and aria in Act I beginning "Verathen! Von euch verathen!" and, in Act III, the introduction to the finale. But nothing seriously to be missed is lost, and these cuts may be living German tradition. The story, by Lortzing himself, is entertaining. The score alternately recalls *Volkslieder*, Mozart (especially in the ensembles), Johann Strauss, and a German band—but remains constantly relevant to the text. Horst Günter excels as the Czar. Equally good are Alfred Pfeifle (Peter Ivanov), Gustav Neidlinger (the Burgomaster of Saardam), Ellinor Junker-Giesen (Marie), Therese Anders (Widow Brown), and Walther Ludwig (the French Ambassador). The minor roles have been handled with the same care and precision.

In short, the Decca recording of "Zar und Zimmermann" excellently explains why a light opera composed as long ago as 1837 retains its hold on the German public to this day, as well as how, achieving popularity in England (as "Peter the Shipwright"), it influenced the operettas of Gilbert and Sullivan.

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Cherubini, Schmitt, Fauré

By ROLAND GELATT

MARIA LUIGI CHERUBINI belongs to the company of imported composers who helped sustain musical life in France during the long and unfertile hiatus between the death of Rameau and the emergence of Berlioz. Beethoven rated him highly. "Of all living composers of operas," he is quoted as saying, "Cherubini is the one I most respect." His opinion has not been shared by posterity. Toscanini, however, has occasionally exhumed Cherubini's D minor Symphony (which he recorded for RCA), and in February 1950 he performed the imposing Requiem Mass in C minor, which dates from 1816 and is generally acknowledged to be Cherubini's masterpiece.

This mass has recently been recorded in Italy under the direction of Carlo Maria Giulini (Angel 35042, $5.95/$4.95). It is a cold and vast piece of music, heavy with contrapuntal science, its marbled texture showing a strong kinship to the immense historical paintings that Jacques Louis David was creating at the same period. Berlioz praised it for "abundance of idea, fulness of form, and sustained sublimity of style," and all these the Requiem Mass in C minor has in good supply; what it lacks is the stamp of individual expression, that compelling force of personal communication which makes Berlioz's Requiem, for instance, so moving and memorable an experience. Listening to Cherubini's Requiem is like walking through an empty palace bereft of all the trappings of human habitation; the architecture is impressive, and you are struck every so often by passing beauties, but it is only a shell, a handsome but desiccated husk without involvement with life.

Nevertheless, as Toscanini has demonstrated, the Requiem Mass in C minor is worth doing occasionally, and worth doing with care and affection. I cannot say that Maestro Giulini and his musicians from the Santa Cecilia Academy in Rome have given Cherubini his due. The tempos are flabby, the attacks of chorus and orchestra blurred. It is a pedestrian reading which fails to make the most of the music's virtues. The "Recordare" in the "Dies Irae," for example, is punctuated with a recurrent descending figure in the violins that could be made highly expressive, but here it is played in a stodgy, almost apologetic manner, and thus misses fire completely.

CHERUBINI'S classic, severe style of choral writing had long since gone by the boards when Florent Schmitt wrote his "Psaume 47" in 1904. Few pieces in the history of music are more frenetic and overblown than this Biblical setting for chorus and orchestra. Schmitt has always been admired by the French because he writes music on a brawny, epic scale; they can point to him with pride when the charge is leveled that the French musical genius excels only in the domain of subtle and refined art. But the question is not whether Schmitt speaks loudly, for anyone can raise his voice, but whether he speaks loudly well.

From my admittedly limited experience of Schmitt's music I have never been convinced that he does. Hearing the "Psaume 47" just after Toscanini's performance of "Don Quixote," I was more than ever skeptical of Schmitt's success in what he set out to do. The comparison is worth making because Schmitt is essentially a French Richard Strauss, addicted to the same kind of orchestral largess and to bizarre and pungent harmonic clashes; but where Strauss tells a moving story with the full panoply of his colossal rhetoric, Schmitt merely makes a noise.

Many people find the noise exciting, and they will undoubtedly welcome the new recording of "Psaume 47" (Angel 35020, $5.95/$4.95), especially since it bears the imprimatur of the venerable M. Schmitt himself. Georges Tzipine conducts the Conservatoire Orchestra and the Chorale Elisabeth Brasseur, and Denise Duval negotiates the fiendishly difficult part for solo soprano. The science of recording has still to solve the problem of dealing with great masses of singers and instrumentalists in large auditoriums. EMI's Paris engineers have captured plenty of sound, but I miss the feeling of space between the assembled musical forces that one would experience in a concert hall.

WHAT a welcome change to go from the austerities of Cherubini and the histrionics of Schmitt to the ordered grace of Fauré's Requiem! The compassion and solace of this music, its flowing and leisurely periods are recreated superlatively in a performance conducted by André Cluytens and recorded in Paris (Angel 35019, $5.95/$4.95). The reproduction (1950 vintage) offers no high-frequency thrills, but it conveys admirably the hollow resonance of music sung in a spacious church. I prefer it to the dry studio sound of Capitol's recent recording by the Roger Wagner Chorale and Concerts Arts Orchestra (P-8241, $5.45). And though Wagner's soloists (Patricia Beems and Theodor Uppman) acquit themselves with more distinction than their French counterparts, the Wagner Chorale itself is not so persuasively attuned to the Fauré idiom as the Chanteurs de Saint-Eustache in the Cluytens version.

Florent Schmitt and Georges Tzipine—"music on a brawny, epic scale."

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HITS AND MISSES

Blue, Turning Gay

FREDERIC RAMSEY, JR., the mighty discatorial impresario from New Hope, Pa., has been showering me with his latest works, and it is a happy privilege indeed. I can only begin to suggest the contents of the chests. First, on four twelve-inch LP's there are no less than ninety-four songs by the late folk singer and twelve-string guitarist Hudie Ledbetter, better known as Leadbelly: "Leadbelly's Last Sessions" (Folkways FP 241 and 242). Ramsey got these numbers down on tape in his own parlor. A good deal of Leadbelly's talk is recorded, including one ludicrous spat with his wife, and the discs in general represent the singer with pith and amplitude, in the way that the Library of Congress recordings catch the great New Orleans jazz pianist and singer Jelly Roll Morton. Leadbelly was a far from finished guitarist. He could frequently, as musicians say, "go off the chord." But he had a voice of fine raw vigor, any amount of spirit, and an overwhelming repertory. Just speeding through these titles, I can pick out the following varied program: "Go Down, Ol' Hannah" (the sun), "Blue Tail Fly," "Rock Island Line," "Ain't It a Shame to Go Fishin' on a Sunday," "He Never Said a Mumblin' Word," "The Grey Goose," "The Titanic," "Careless Love," "Easy Rider," "The Hesitation Blues," "Chinatown," and "Nobody Knows You When You're Down and Out." Ramsey, in short, has produced a distinguished musical document, and he accompanies it with a long and sensitive program note.

He has also sent me the last four LP's and an Addenda LP in his notable Jazz series, also for Folkways. This group of eleven records, as I have suggested before, constitutes a most succinct yet remarkably thoroughgoing history of jazz. Vol. 7 is "New York (1922-1934)" (Folkways FP 67) and includes white operations centering around Red Nichols, Miff Mole, Jack Teagarden, Eddie Land, and Joe Venuti, together with music of such colored masters as Fletcher Henderson, Duke Ellington, Fats Waller, and Henry Allen. These are in the main small-band sides. In Vol. 8 Ramsey turns to "Big Bands (1924-1934)" (Folkways FP 69) with a sampling of the vintage work of Henderson, Ellington, Bennie Moten, Charlie Johnson and others. Vol. 9 is a remarkable resumé of jazz on the "Piano" (Folkways FP 71), the artists ranging from Jelly Roll Morton through such middle figures as Earl Hines and Meade Lux Lewis to the subtle modernism of Lennie Tristano, who contributes a magical blues. Vol. 10 is devoted to the boogie-woogie piano virtuosi and the jump band tradition of Kansas City (Folkways FP 73) and the "Addenda" (Folkways FP 75) is a mixed and fascinating bill in which—just to give an idea—Ma Rainey can be found intoning "Hear Me Talking to You" with Her Tub-Jug Washboard Band, and Dizzy Gillespie delivers a baroque "Groovin' High," which upon close listening will be found to be an utterly skilful emanation from the chordal base of "Whispering." In fact, although Ramsey himself makes no such claim, this "Addenda" LP may be described as a slim history of jazz within a history of the same. To the New Hope enthusiast, all gratitude for what I know has been, among other things, a labor of love, and which certainly sounds like it.

Devotees of the New Orleans tradition will not wish to overlook a program of funeral music by a true Crescent City marching combination, the Eureka Brass Band. In "New Orleans Parade" (Pax 9001) this ten-piece ensemble, with the superb George Lewis on the clarinet, offers "Sing On," "Garlands of Flowers," "West Lawn Dirge," and "Lady Be Good." The band includes veterans and younger men who have emulated them; the music is poignant to a degree; and Charles Edward Smith's excellent notes amount to a ten-minute course in the New Orleans brass band ritualism.

The month has other traditional fragrances. One of the finest blues singers of all time, Ida Cox, is heard in recordings of the Twenties with such instrumental masters as Tommy Ladnier, cornet; Charlie Green, trombone; and Fletcher Henderson, piano (Riverside RLP 1019). This disc includes Miss Cox's desolate "Coffin Blues," a lament over the casket of the woman's lover which for woeful urgency has no parallel that I know of in blues literature. This threnody is accompanied by Ladnier and Jesse Crump, at the organ, and the three artists combine to bring off one of those musico-emotional feats which always threaten to come apart but which remain wonderfully whole and moving. Blues, as has often been remarked, are not customarily of unrelieved gloom. This is a remarkable exception.

The low-down, honky-tonk Chicago school—and I love it—gets its innings with 1931 recordings by the trombonist Roy Palmer and the State Street Ramblers (Riverside RLP 1020). Mr. Palmer is a delightfully profane man on the slide iron and he is assisted by, among others, Albert Bell on the kazoo, Darnell Howard on the reeds, and Jimmy Bertrand, washboard. The renditions bear such titles as "Sic 'Em Tige," and why not? From California the pianist Burt Bales sends a fine program of ragtime selections, some half of them by Jelly Roll Morton (Good Time Jazz L19).

I LEARNED the other day, from a Swiss acquaintance, that there is on the continent an organization known as The Friends of Fats, or, I suppose, Les Amis de Fats. Small wonder. Fats Waller's memory is green every time his discs are spun. His unnumbered admirers now have a special pleasure in store. Two LP's of previously unreleased Waller recordings represent the irresistible man at the very height of his insouciance, his pianistic grace, and sunlit lyricism. In "Jivin' with Fats" (Riverside RLP 1022) he nonchalantly shows us things we had never dreamed could be found in such standards as "Old Oaken Bucket," "Annie Laurie," "Loch Lomond," and "When You and I Were Young Maggie." Fats was famous for the kidding of songs he did not particularly care for. He obviously doted on these songs, and the simple beneficence of this music making is incomparable. The same spirit, deepened, is to be heard in his four spirituals on "Fats at the Organ" (Riverside RLP 1021). He was a master of the Hammond instrument, his playing full of staccato nuance and free of schmalz.

In the modern jazz area this month I can suggest a new LP by that first lady of the jazz piano, Mary Lou Williams (Contemporary C 2507). This is full of harmonically elaborate delights, and I am especially taken by her version of "They Can't Take That Away from Me." Howard Rumsey's All Stars from Hermosa Beach, California, have another flashing program with many Latin-American style drumming felicities (Contemporary C2506). The Swedish chamber jazz of Lars Gullin and his quartet and quintet (Contemporary C2505) is as modern as one could wish, but strikes me as rather shapeless noodling save in the case of the buoyant piano of Putte Lindblom. Quite possibly I need to hear these sides more often.

—WILDER HOBSON.

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Boult's Musical Britannia

By IRVING KOLODIN

CONSIDERING his attainments and musical eminence, the name of Adrian Boult is far from adequately represented in the record catalogues, especially in those listing products of present manufacture. Considering, further, what Westminster did for the previously obscure Hermann Scherchen, it may be conjectured that the appearance, simultaneously, of new Boult-directed versions of Gustav Holst's "The Planets" (WL 5325, $5.95) and Sir William Walton's "Belshazzar's Feast" (WL 5248, $5.95), plus a sampling of Vaughan Williams ("The Wasps" and "Old King Cole," on WL 5228, $5.95) is but a foreshadowing of things to come.

But what a shadow it casts over some of the current maestri represented in the LP catalogues by a dozen or more discs! Here is ripe artistry in the full energy of a man whose birth goes back to 1889, thus making him indubitably sixty-five, but with a vitality and power in his music making that is akin to his considerably senior Monteux or decidedly junior Steinberg. Probably it was long immersal in the affairs of the BBC—he was its music director for the determinative period from 1930 to 1950—that made him less familiar than smaller men to an international audience. (The English, of course, would consider that a blessing rather than an injustice.)

Now, however, as permanent conductor of the London Philharmonic Orchestra and director of the Promenade Concerts (for long the orbit of Sir Henry Wood's activities), Sir Adrian has re-established contact with public music making in London, and let us hope soon here. There are several American orchestras that could profitably integrate him into their yearly schedules, beginning with one that does a large share of its work on Fifty-seventh Street in New York City.

Observing the prominence of "The Planets"—long identified with Boult, who introduced the work to the world at a private performance in 1918 and conducted the public premiere in a concert of the Royal Philharmonic Society on February 27, 1919—in this repertory, one may say that the Boult-Westminster partnership has been born under a favorable sign. "Belshazzar's Feast" has long been in want of the kind of artfully defined, powerfully resonant reproduction it here receives, and the Vaughan Williams repertory is welcome also.

As conductor of one of the two previous full-length recorded versions of "The Planets" (the other was by the composer), Boult's authority in this music is well-established. Both by virtue of the expanded range of this recording and some newly defined interpretative ideas the present performance gives us the most representative opportunity yet to evaluate this massive score, to separate content from manner and strike some balance between the two. The oddity is that in this country, at least, "The Planets"—cruel test though it is of mechanical means of reproduction—has been known almost wholly through recordings. "Live" performances have been rarities, *good* "live" performances that much more scarce.

As most persons are aware, Holst was here treating the heavenly constellations not in their astronomical aspect, but in terms of their astrological significance. It was unfortunate for the total effect of the work, I think, that "Mars, the Bringer of War" is the opening section. For all its clangor and ferocity, it comes to be a rather static piece of music. The device of a persistent rhythm which Ravel exploited so completely in "Bolero" is indicated here, but not so well thought through. Thus, I will personally admit to some disaffection based on this not too promising first section. However, "Venus, the Bringer of Peace" is a much more satisfying conception, and the whole second side—which begins with "Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity" and continues with "Saturn, the Bringer of Old Age," "Uranus, the Magician," and ends with "Neptune, the Mystic"— is a match for any music written in England during Holst's lifetime.

The test, of course, is the residue of musical substance that can be isolated from the storytelling or pictorial elements of the program. As Boult demonstrates, this is a score of rich musical fantasy, a literal text in the use of a gargantuan orchestra. Many of its devices have been picked over by a generation of film-scorers and radio "bridge" writers, but in its integrity it stands forth as one of the solid works of the present time. As a recording, it sets a fresh standard of justice and realism for Westminster products. The previous Boult-BBC version (LHMV 1002) was a considerable piece of craftsmanship, but a comparison will show more definition in this one, plus a warmer wash of tone throughout. My explanation would be in terms of enhanced overtones, which come closer to completing the actual sound of individual instruments and the total orchestra than was managed before.

Gustav Holst—"rich musical fantasy."

A SIMILAR tale can be told of "Belshazzar's Feast," though here the measurement of audibility is a simpler one. I have been listening to it from a test pressing, with no text available. However, I have had no difficulty in following the setting, almost word by word. To be sure, it is in English, and that should be taken for granted. But how often can it be? First credit goes to the London Philharmonic Choir for its notably excellent articulation and to the mastery of Dennis Noble (once more the baritone soloist as he was in the original recording of the early Forties under the composer's direction). But the microphone-to-disc sequence has been carried out with stunning success.

Since creating it in 1931 Walton has been knighted and honored with the commission to create an important part of the music used for the coronation of Elizabeth II, but it is hardly possible to say that he has realized the hopes that were roused by this work. The Violin Concerto is a respectable work, the earlier "Façade" a decidedly gay one, but echoes of the real propulsion and musical fervor of "Belshazzar's Feast" are hard to find elsewhere in Walton's

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music—or such of it as is known to us. If there is more to be said on this subject, Boult is obviously the man to say it.

Lest it be surmised that he is a conductor specializing in the music of the big drum and the clang of cymbals (both of which have a robust role in the Holst and Walton works), Boult gives equal satisfaction in the more modestly scored "Wasps" music and the jolly "King Cole" score of Vaughan Williams. Some of us know the lively overture to the Aristophanes play from the Malcolm Sargent recording of another day, but the other sections of incidental music included on this disc are well worth hearing. They are not uniform in quality—somehow, the big drum and the cymbal do get a share of prominence—but the score shows an aspect of Vaughan Williams little known to his admirers in this country.

As much can be said for the "King Cole" score of 1923, which has a touch, now and then, of the meditative Vaughan Williams we know from the "Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis" and the more improvisatory spirit of the "Norfolk" Rhapsodies. When it is reflected that we are refering to a man with the "London" Symphony of 1914 at one extreme and the questing E minor (No. 6) of 1948 at the other, it is plain we are dealing with a composer of very considerable powers. Mention of these works recalls, too, that it is Boult who is credited with representative LP versions of each. That may now be said, as well, about "The Wasps" and "King Cole."

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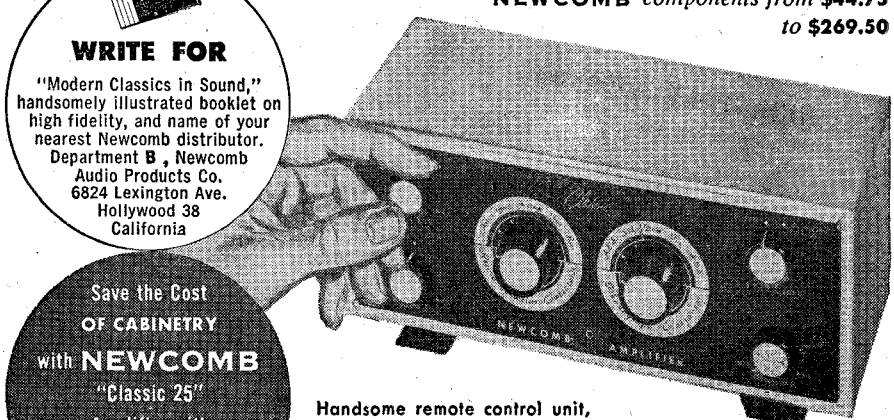

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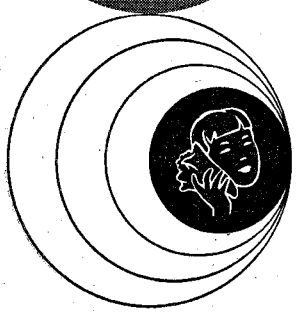

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An Unworked Italian Lode

"Italian Classical Symphonists"—Albinoni: *Concerto in D minor, Opus 5, No. 7*; Corelli-Geminiani: *Concerto No. 2*; G. B. Sammartini: *Violin Concerto No. 2, Symphony in G minor, and Fifth Cantata for the Fridays in Lent*; Pergolesi: *"Orfeo," cantata*; Cambini: *"Andromaque," cantata*; Galuppi: *Overture No. 2*; Giordani: *Piano Concerto*; Valentini: *Oboe Concerto*; Brunetti: *Symphony in C minor and Symphony in G minor*; Viotti: *Concerto for Piano and Violin*; Rosetti: *Horn Concerto*; Boccherini: *Symphony in F major, Opus 35, No. 4. The Italian Chamber Orchestra conducted by Newell Jenkins.* (Haydn Society HSL 74/77, $23.80.)

THE TITLE of this collection and Mr. Jenkins's notes could easily have gotten the Haydn Society in trouble. Take, for instance, the second record of the set; it contains a cantata by a composer who was Gluck's teacher. Also, Mr. Jenkins makes his men into incomparable paragons who can do things "few composers before or since could," which of course is slightly exaggerated. But after all, titles and blurbs do not make records, and with a little housecleaning we can bring order into this anthology and discover for ourselves much fine and intriguing music.

Let us call the set "Italian Masters of the Eighteenth Century" and organize it in this order: (1) Masters of the High Baroque Concerto (Valentini, Albinoni, Geminiani); (2) The Harbingers of the Classic Symphony (Sammartini, Giordani); (3) The Italian Classic Symphonists (Boccherini, Brunetti, Viotti); (4) The Italian Cantata in the Eighteenth Century (Pergolesi, Sammartini, Cambini). Rosetti (alias Rössler) will have to be left out; he is not an Italian and does not fit in this scheme. And the Galuppi piece is a trifle. This arrangement makes sense and we can deal with the works in orderly fashion.

The Valentini concerto is a fine work in the full Baroque style of the great concerto composers whose contemporary he was. The soloist is an accomplished artist, but the spacious slow movement could have used a little more breadth on the part of both soloist and conductor. Albinoni's concerto grosso is a vigorous piece in the grand manner. Bach knew this composer and showed his appreciation by borrowing some of his themes. Although the work is full-bodied, it is a bit short of breath—which reminds us of the fugues Bach wrote on Albinoni's ideas. In his quiet way the old Cantor sat down and wrote a big fugue as if to show what could be done with such a good subject. The Geminiani concerto is really a transcription of Corelli's Violin Sonata Opus 5, No. 2. Geminiani did a good job, although he did not hesitate to do a little Stokowskying, which was standard practice in his time. The work is thoroughly enjoyable.

The next group of composers is of exceptional importance both musically and historically, for it was through their efforts that the pre-Classic style was established. This is one of the least known provinces of musical history, and its Italian phase is especially nebulous. We shall skip chronology and deal with Giordani first. There were two brothers Giordani. Which one wrote this concerto? It could have been written only by a musician familiar with Johann Christian Bach's works, but since both brothers lived for a while in London even this fact does not help us. The clear melodic articulation betrays the Neapolitan but also shows the discipline gained by the acquaintance with Bach. Carlo Bussotti plays it well and cleanly. Then we come to a man who is a legendary figure and supposedly guards the main entrance to this unknown edifice, Sammartini. The violin concerto was extant in 1762, but must be earlier, perhaps much earlier. I should not be surprised if it turned out to be a work of the older Sammartini, Giuseppe, for it is typical Baroque concerto writing with a particularly fine slow movement. The Symphony in G minor is another story; it is a work that makes one sit up after a few measures. Through the Baroque exterior there emerge flashes of truly symphonic nature. He hangs on doggedly, even if for short stretches, to small thematic fragments which he belabors with gusto, and there are those rolling orchestral crescendos that we assign to the Mannheimers. All this was happening at a time when J. S. Bach was ascending to the last summits of Baroque polyphony, at around 1740!

—Bettmann Archive.

Pergolesi—"unexplored territory."

THE third group of composers has to be handled with care. Once the new style crossed the Alps the competition soon became formidable. These three composers were contemporaries of Mozart and Haydn, and Viotti lived far into the nineteenth century. Well, they cannot hold their own in this company—but who could? All the same, they are fine musicians, and these recordings furnish us with excellent information about the state of Italian symphony in the High Classic era. The Boccherini symphony, though written probably around 1782, belongs rather in the pre-Classic era. It affords a revealing glimpse into the historical process, for the echoes of the great Italian violin schools are still here, but tinged with that Rococo of which Boccherini was one of the few Italian representatives. One can observe how the mainstay of Baroque musical architecture, the sequence, is losing its constructive qualities and becoming a device. Still, all of it adds up to a pleasant piece. Brunetti is one of the many unknowns of this era —few reference works mention his name—but make no mistake, he has a pronounced musical personality. This forgotten symphonist had a predilection for little languorous deflections that take on a melodic shape right in the midst of rushing thematic figure-work. Of the two compositions, the Symphony in G minor is the more interesting; it has fire, élan, and good craftsmanship. The light Romantic touch we noticed in the C minor Symphony is more pronounced in this work and is a bit played up by the conductor. The slow movement is remarkable, elegiac and passionate. Brunetti is a good man and deserves more recognition. Viotti is, of course, well known for his many violin concertos. I regret to say, though, that this particular double concerto strikes me as something of a freak. Piano and

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violin do not mix too well even in chamber music; in the concerto they are almost impossible to reconcile. Viotti seems to be in a constant quandary about what to do with them.

Mr. Jenkins very commendably worked from manuscripts and prepared his own performance material. This was especially important in the case of Pergolesi, whose works are mutilated in the available Italian editions; moreover, a number of them are unauthenticated. (This is the case with the sinfonia that precedes the cantata; still, it is a pleasant piece.) The cantata "Orfeo" is a representative work of Italian dramatic vocal music of the earlier eighteenth century. The recitatives are superb and the arias ingratiating. This too is unexplored territory, and it is gratifying to have such a fine example from among the unknown thousands. Alfredo Bianchi sings well but a little more ardor would be expected from an Italian tenor. And now we are jolted once more by Sammartini, for his Fifth Cantata for the Fridays in Lent is a little masterpiece. It is high time that this man be dug out from under the debris of history; maybe Fausto Torrefranca, the Italian musicologist, is not far from the truth when he claims for the Sammartinis both paternity and supremacy over the German pre-Classic schools. The introductory sinfonia is a gem and the arias are pure bel canto steeped in melancholy. The end is a tiny ensemble finale, rather early for 1745, although Handel did such things on a larger scale a dozen years before. Cambini's cantata "Andromaque" must have originated around 1800. It is really an operatic scene and a splendid workmanlike piece, again showing how little we know of the minor composers of this period. It is capably performed.

THUS, after first misgivings, this anthology turns out to be a most welcome and useful collection of out-of-the-way (to us) music, and it is hoped that the Haydn Society will continue to explore this unworked lode. Mr. Jenkins must be a young man full of enthusiasm. He conducts vigorously but needs a little more finesse. He deserves great credit for the care with which he always lists his sources, editions, manuscripts, libraries, etc. This is especially important because these are unknown and unpublished works. The recordings (made in Bologna) are very good, though occasionally the treble can stand a little attenuation. Students of the history of music, in and out of school, will be greatly helped by this collection, while those who are interested in just plain listening will not be disappointed either.

—PAUL HENRY LANG.

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Recordings in Review

The Lieder of Gurre

SCHOENBERG: *"Gurrelieder." René Leibowitz conducting the chorus and orchestra of the New Symphony Society of Paris, with Richard Lewis, Nell Tangeman, Ethel Semser, etc.* (Haydn Society HSL 100, $18.50.)

HOW the Haydn Society comes to produce the first full-length recording of "Gurrelieder" in twenty years is another story. This one has to do with the fact itself and the generally commendable execution of a problem almost defeating in prospect. René Leibowitz, fortunately for the kind of investment it represents, was not defeated by it; his soloists are excellently chosen (for the most part), his orchestra and chorus have been well-prepared, and the note-by-note progress of the score has been fairly taken down by the recorders.

This, then, is a conscientious, painstaking, and in some respects impressive "Gurrelieder." I would not state that it offers the last word on the subject for several reasons, having to do largely with the nature of Schoenberg's score, which is at least three things: a series of episodes involving solo singers and orchestra; a series of vivid, elaborately written orchestral interludes; and a combination of all these with chorus and, finally, a "Sprecher."

Where the problem concerns such singers as Richard Lewis (a superb Waldemar), Nell Tangeman (a superior voice of the wood-dove), and Ferry Gruber (The Fool), Leibowitz works with them in unity and to excellent purpose. (Ethel Semser, who sings Tove, is too often beyond her depth, musically and vocally, to give what is asked of her.) In the orchestral interludes Leibowitz does not provide the kind of insistent leadership to make these sections amount to what they should in the total sequence. He holds the sections with soloists, chorus, and orchestra together efficiently, but in terms of the enormously intricate orchestral score one sometimes feels a blanket has been thrown over detail. Top trills of the piccolo and flute, bottom growls of the bassoons and contrabass are audible enough, but there is a no-man's-land between, where the score indicates all sorts of things happening that can't be heard. My opinion is that for all the considerable time expended it just wasn't enough to solve *all* the problems. But many of them are managed impressively well.

As for the work itself (if anybody cares, at this time, for a personal evaluation of "Gurrelieder"), hearing it after a lapse of a decade or more I am struck by two things: the extent to which it looks back, rather than forward, and its ever-more-apparent dependence on "Parsifal" and "Tristan." Certainly it has its musical beauties, but I wonder whether the common emphasis has not been reversed; that is to say, whether the fact that Schoenberg became an atonalist did not direct attention to *this* work. In his lifetime, of course, he regarded it as a passing phase, en route to his artistic destination. Perhaps this was, really, the end of his road rather than a way point. It could be.

Whatever else may be said, the Haydn Society has produced its "Gurrelieder" with model attention to scholarship: an excellent essay by Leibowitz on the music, a historical tracing of the Jens Peter Jacobsen text by Allen D. Sapp, and the whole of the text with its English equivalent.

Gieseking's "Carnaval"

SCHUMANN: *"Carnaval";* MOZART: *Sonatas Nos. 14 (K.457) and 15 (K.545). Walter Gieseking, piano.* (Columbia ML 4772, $5.95.)

THOSE who admire the Rachmaninoff treatment of this work (RCA Victor LCT 12), will find much of the same, at appropriately more lifelike size, in this addition to the Gieseking (and the Schumann catalogue). It is, by any standards, a memorable instance of pianistic mastery, with a range of dynamics that not only reminds us of the fabulous Gieseking pianissimo, but also of his power-packed forte. In fact, there is no other recording by him that so vividly conveys his "pounce" on the keys in a sudden burst of sound, or the quiet that can fill a room when he plays softly.

In terms of Schumann it is sometimes a mite more brilliant than the music can usefully absorb, but I am prepared to acknowledge that as far from the worst thing that could be said of a "Carnaval" interpretation. Certainly it makes one conscious anew of the vibrance and energy in this work and its remarkable range of emotions. I might, on comparison, find the Novaes version more sympathetic to my taste, but this is one of the great "Carnaval" performances of any time, especially in its later, broader phases. The two Mozart sonatas are played with a perfectionist's pains and a mezzotinter's taste. Excellent sound in both instances, especially in the Schumann.

Short, Also Sweet

MASSENET: *"Adieu" and "Gavotte" ("Manon");* also THOMAS: *"Connais tu" and "Gavotte" ("Mignon"). Lucrezia Bori, soprano.* (RCA Victor ERAT-3, $1.58.)

THESE are welcome restorations that rekindle admiration for the art of Bori and also serve to direct attention to "Treasury" material in a new guise. Each *side* is the equivalent of a full 78-rpm disc, the object being to combine longer playing time with more flexibility than can be contrived in an LP sequence. The advantages are especially noteworthy in such other reissues as Ponselle's "Norma" excerpts, her "Aïda" duets with Martinelli, a series of Gigli-De Luca duets we haven't been hearing for some time, etc.

Bori may be heard further in a much earlier phase of her career in "O soave fanciulla" (from "Bohème") and "Parigi, o cara" (from "Traviata") dating from 1914 and sung with John McCormack. This disc (ERAT-17) also contains McCormack's treasurable "Oh Sleep! Why Dost Thou Leave Me?" (from Handel's "Semele") and the farewell from "Lucia." Whether or not the "Semele" fanciers will care about the "Bohème" excerpt, or vice versa, may be questionable, but the McCormack public is not likely to quibble.

Maître Monteux

SCRIABIN: *"Poem of Ecstasy";* LISZT: *"Les Préludes." Pierre Monteux conducting the Boston Symphony Orchestra.* (RCA Victor LM 1775, $5.72.)

THE CONCEPT of a man rounding out a cyclical career has rarely been more applicable than in the case of Pierre Monteux, who has been making music-lovers on the Eastern seaboard happy after long, profitable years in San Francisco. The New York public has recently been reminded that Monteux was "returning" to the Metropolitan Opera House after three decades away, but it should be remembered that it was to Boston that he went when he left the Metropolitan, there to develop what was freely characterized as "a perfect in-

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strument" when he turned it over to Serge Koussevitzky in 1923.

All of this is pertinent to this disc, one of the best that the Boston Symphony has produced in months. It wouldn't be diplomatic to make a host unhappy about the accomplishments of a guest, but it may be said that the orchestra plays splendidly for Monteux in his own manner and with a fine sense of willing participation in a mutually agreeable undertaking. I am particularly partial to the free-striding, beautifully balanced presentation of Liszt, to which Monteux has restored a bloom one listener—this one—had never expected to re-experience.

The Scriabin is another, and to my taste, less appealing story. Monteux was long credited with the only recording of it in the catalogue (with the San Francisco Orchestra, RCA Victor set 1270), and this is certainly as authoritative, with some details (especially the superb trumpet playing of Roger Voisin) that make it preferable to the recent excellent Capitol version by Manuel Rosenthal, as well as to the less exceptional Mitropoulos-New York Philharmonic on Columbia.

When Monteux swings into the full fervor of his Liszt (even more so than the Scriabin), the RCA engineers give us back a likeness of the Boston Symphony on a new level of realism. It may be mentioned too that the excellent annotations are the work of John N. Burk (his name was inadvertently omitted).

"Het" Chopin

CHOPIN: *Preludes. Cor de Groot, piano.* (Epic LC 3017, $5.95.) *Scherzos, Ballades, Impromptus, Barcarolle (Opus 60). Claudio Arrau, piano.* (Decca DX 130, $11.70.)

TO JUDGE from his recent attention, on the Epic label, to works of Beethoven, Schumann, and Morton Gould ("Interplay") as well as the present series of Chopin Preludes, Cor de Groot may be described as a kind of Dutch Arrau, with a considerable competence for everything and no overpowering compulsion for anything. The present set of Preludes, for example, are vigorously, expertly, but rather anonymously played, leaving them well short of the phonographic standard associated with Novaes, Rubinstein, or for that matter Arrau himself on Columbia ML 4420. The recording is clear enough, but a little dull.

As for the authentic Arrau, the present Decca issue is described as the first in a series of releases embracing the whole literature of Chopin. Inasmuch as Arrau is currently engaged in a series of recitals in New York devoted to the Beethoven sonata series and has announced his intention of doing all the Mozart concerti in the anniversary year, his encompassing abilities are a certainty in his own estimation, at any rate.

Let there be no mistake in this matter: I respect Arrau as a pianist of broad and lofty attainments, with a technical equipment equal to most any demands. But there is something in an honest evaluation of objectives that rules out equal sympathy for all of Mozart, all of Beethoven, and all of Chopin (not to mention Albeniz's "Iberia"). Other pianists might play all of these notes with equal accuracy and emphasis; most would be too self-effacing to try. What Arrau provides is mechanically admirable, but with no special virtues of sympathy or understanding to justify an investment. Tonally, the performances are all first class, and the reproduction is both strong and resonant.

3 D Beethoven (Opus 61)

BEETHOVEN: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in D, Opus 61. Bronislaw Hubermann, violin, with the Vienna Philharmonic conducted by George Szell.* (Columbia ML 4769, $5.95.) *Albert Spalding, violin, with orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Loibner.* (Remington 199-144, $2.99.) *Herman Krebbers, violin, with the Hague Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Willem van Otterloo.* (Epic LC 3023, $5.95.)

"SEEK and ye shall find" is a maxim as applicable to the judgment of phonograph records as to everything else—and the finding here is that the Hubermann version, dating from 1933, is the most provocative, the Krebbers (of last year) the best sounding, and the Spalding, of 1952, the most satisfying. Does the recording process play favorites in terms of current celebrity? Both Hubermann and Spalding are dead, and Krebbers is not even a name in this country.

As the documentation of a personality not only admired but revered in some circles, Columbia's reissue of the Hubermann version of a work in which he enjoyed great repute is decidedly commendable. And for all its age, it retains a substantial likeness of all the elements involved, especially Hubermann's own dramatic, quixotic, compelling, and repelling way of playing. It is simple to say that he takes liberties only in the unaccompanied passages—but such liberties with tempi and accent! One is

Albert Spalding—"lack of pretense."

quick to admire the piercing insight, the compelling sweep of some melodic phrasing, but how is one to explain the ugly, pointless cadenza, played with the greatest of zest? It is playing to be heard with a kind of mental filter that will screen out the excesses, while admitting the magnificences that abound—intermittently. The youthful Szell (then mid-thirty-ish) handles his assignment ably, and the orchestral values are amazingly acute. Certainly an item for the musical Hot Stove League to argue over, dissect, and admire.

Spalding's performance offers no such promise of revelation, but it delivers, nevertheless, a substantial amount. There is no point in holding a score with the Spalding, as there is with the Hubermann, for there are simply no deviations. This may sound like a compliment in reverse, but the fact is that this recording may well stand as Spalding's monument in its directness, lack of pretense, and attention to the business in hand. Compared with the Hubermann, it may be described as an etching rather than an oil, but the splotches of individuality in the latter are less justice to the subject than the straight, true lines of the former. Spalding plays his own cadenzas, shorter and prevailingly more suitable than those of Hubermann.

The Dutch addition to the Epic catalogue is forceful and musicianly, but otherwise without compelling interest. Krebbers is a sound violinist, but it is hard to believe that there are not a dozen concertmasters of American orchestras who could do as well. As for the recording, it features a fade-in, fade-out treatment of the orchestra which is intermittently arresting but too artificial for durable pleasure.

—IRVING KOLODIN.

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Recordings Reports: Classical LP's

WORK, PERFORMER, DATA	REPORT
Beethoven: Rondos, Opus 51 (Nos. 1 and 2). Wilhelm Kempff, piano. Decca DL4086, $2.50.	Kempff's practised hand plus recording of uncommon clarity and justice make this pairing on a ten-inch LP decidedly attractive. The works are full of music, in a vein not too often favored by recorders of Beethoven.
Beethoven: Concerto in G, No. 4. Artur Schnabel, with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by I. Dobrowen. RCA Victor LCT 1131, $5.72.	Thanks are in order to RCA for continuing its program of Schnabel reissues with this well-sounding postwar version made in England. However, on reacquaintance this treatment by Schnabel is less fresh in feeling, less easy in execution than the earlier one with Stock, not to mention the still earlier one with Sargent. Dobrowen contributes little to the total, but the sound is surprisingly satisfactory.
Chopin: Concerto in E minor (No. 1). Alexander Uninsky, with the Hague Philharmonic conducted by Willem van Otterloo. Epic LC 3012, $5.95.	The enthusiasm of a recent month (RECORDINGS, *SR* Oct. 31) for Uninsky's playing of Tchaikovsky cannot be echoed here, for his manner is too heavy and matter of fact for best results in Chopin. However, his pianistic ability is unquestionable, his bright sound and the good orchestral playing strongly reproduced.
Cherubini: "Pater Noster," for violin and orchestra. Jean Pougnet, violin, with the London Baroque Ensemble conducted by Karl Haas. Decca DL 4081, $2.50.	A reflective, warmly expressive work (wholly lacking in documentation in this Decca issue) beautifully played, at ten-inch-lp-side length, by the excellent violinist and ensemble. Overside, Haas offers, in delectable succession, a brief sinfonia (in A) by Tartini, a Lully march, and three marches by André Philidor (L'Ainé). Beautiful material, expertly played, suavely recorded.
D'Indy: "Symphony on a French Mountain Air." Fabienne Jacquinot, piano, with Anatole Fistoulari conducting. M-G-M E 3068, $4.85.	Fistoulari has hardly the subtle hand this music requires, and Miss Jacquinot's tone is rather brittle for its rolling measures. In other words, a rather generalized treatment of a highly specialized work. On the second side she plays, fluently and with suitable style, the Piano Concerto No. 5 ("Egyptian") of Saint-Saëns, whose jolly effects include a quotation from "Samson."
Gershwin-Bennett: "Porgy and Bess." Antal Dorati conducting the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra. Mercury MG 50016, $5.95.	Loud, strong, but also a little overproduced treatment of Bennett's "Symphonic Picture," which is here blown up to a size hardly suitable to the frame. However, the hifinatics will find much to occupy them in the overside treatment of Morton Gould's "Spirituals" (see below).
Gould: "Spirituals" and "Interplay." Cor de Groot, piano, with the Hague Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Willem van Otterloo. Epic LC 3021, $5.95.	One could wage a merry war of decibels between these high-pressure "Spirituals" and those above (both are substantially superior to the previous version by Rodzinski), but I think, on balance, there is more genuine music, less show, in the Dutch product. De Groot does surprisingly well with the jazzy "Interplay" ("American Concertette" originally), though the composer's own performance is more idiomatic. Powerful sound.
Mahler: Symphony No. 1. William Steinberg conducting the Pittsburgh Symphony. Capitol P-8224, $5.70.	Assured, authoritative, and warmly personal performance by Steinberg of a work which matches material and treatment in better proportion (and more consecutively) than several of the later, more highly regarded scores. First-class playing, keenly recorded.
Mozart: Piano Concertos, Nos. 15 (K. 450) and 18 (K.456). Ingrid Haebler, piano, with orchestra conducted by Hans Hollreiser. Vox PL 8300, $5.95.	The youthful Miss Haebler is fluent and well schooled, but not yet possessed of the sophistication required for Mozart in the mood of the K.450. The K.456 fares better, though it is more in terms of promise than accomplishment. Workmanlike direction by Hollreiser. Very good sound.
Mozart: Piano Concertos Nos. 17 (K.453), 20 (K.466), 22 (K.482) and 24 (K.491). Edwin Fischer, pianist, and his chamber orchestra, also with orchestras conducted by John Barbirolli, Malcolm Sargent, and Lawrance Collingwood. RCA Victor LCT 6013, $5.72.	A treasurable addition to the "Treasury of Immortal Performances," blending Fischer's intimate understanding of these works with orchestral performances on the whole of superior quality. The original sound offered variable matter to those entrusted with the transfer problem, and the K.482 (E flat) with Barbirolli is somewhat lifeless. However, the C minor (K.491) is decidedly good, the others quite acceptable. In any case, this is a sizeable service to Mozart enthusiasts, of whom the number is increasingly "more" legion.
Mozart: Concerto in E flat (K.447); and Boccherini: Concerto in B flat. Janos Starker, cello, with orchestra conducted by M. Pilzer. Period SPL 579, $5.95.	Lest this be anticipated as a musicological find, it is not a long-lost work by Mozart for cello, but an adaptation by Alexander Fischer of the E flat Horn Concerto. Despite the unlikely premise, the material provides suitable exercise for a cellist of Starker's exceptional abilities. The Boccherini is superbly played, though I find the edition rather ornate, especially the cadenzas of Paul Huetter. Generally excellent recording, somewhat thick in the middle range.
Paganini: Caprices 1-12. Ossy Renardy, violin, with Eugene Helmer, piano. Remington R-199-146, $2.99.	The late Renardy's affection for this literature is no new thing (he did the complete series in a release of the Forties), but it is evident that he had decidedly advanced in his feeling for the music in these pieces as well as their difficulties. Fine style, unflagging accuracy, superb sound from the Guarnerius he played. I prefer the works in their original form (minus the piano parts provided by Ferdinand David), but the combination comes off well in this Remington reproduction.
Schubert: "Die Forelle" and other songs. Jussi Bjoerling, tenor, with Frederick Schauwecker, piano. RCA Victor LM 1771, $5.72.	Bjoerling's good taste in repertory and his sober musical purpose are commendable aspects of a disc that ranges from "Die Allmacht" to Sibelius's "Svarta Rosor" and Rachmaninoff's "Lilacs." Some of the *mezza voce* singing is beautiful, but the restraint of the lieder style is not favorable to his best qualities. Well-balanced recording.
Strauss, Johann: "Fledermaus" Overture, various waltzes. Rudolf Moralt and Franz Salmhofer conducting the Vienna Symphony. Epic LC 3022, $5.95.	If there is still a public for such miscellaneous matter (Moralt joins the "Gypsy Baron" Overture and Von Suppé's "Poet and Peasant" to his "Fledermaus," with the Salmhofer side containing "Wo die Citronen blühen," "Accelerationen," and Josef Strauss's "Acquarellen") it would have to be one which likes its Strauss fast and loud to favor this disc.
Strauss, Richard: "Don Quixote." Pierre Fournier, cello, with Clemens Krauss conducting the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. London LL 855, $5.95.	Close consideration of this fine-sounding issue may be deferred until next month when RCA produces its version by Gregor Piatigorsky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. However, first impressions are not too hospitable to Krauss's rather deliberate way of playing this music, though Fournier is a highly expert player on his instrument.
Tchaikovsky: "Aurora's Wedding." Leopold Stokowski conducting. RCA Victor LM 1774, $5.72.	A handsome companion issue to the briefer "Sleeping Beauty" selection made by Stokowski a few years back, this one also adds the piano pieces "Humoresque" and "Solitude" (both in Stokowski transcriptions) for second side good measure. A powerful example of RCA Victor's new standard in sound, with some outstanding solo work by the excellent first desk men. Otherwise it is Tchaikovsky to the *gout Stokowskien,* which means a good deal of exceptional interpretative art marred by peculiarities of pace and accent. —IRVING KOLODIN.

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"English Suites" in Tandem

AN INTRIGUING COMPARISON is presented by Westminster's release of two versions of Bach's "English Suites" one on the piano by Reine Gianoli (WAL-306, $17.85), the other on the harpsichord by Fernando Valenti (WAL-305, $17.85), both with excellent commentaries by Edward Tatnall Canby.

With the exception of the Preludes, which are mostly pieces in the Italian concerto style, the movements of these Suites form a veritable apotheosis of the seventeenth-century French style of composition. Now, the specialties of the French style were its wealth of expressive ornamentation and its sophisticated exploitation of the subtleties of dance rhythms. Reine Gianoli hasn't the vaguest notion of the function or the proper execution of the French ornaments; nor does she have any sensitivity to the distinctive rhythms of the various dances. Her renditions, therefore, cannot be said to have any close relationship to the expressive purpose of the music. Pianistically, her treatment is what one has come to expect when pianists turn to Bach. That it is unsatisfactory is not so much due to any intrinsic inadequacy of the piano as it is to the fact that the "tradition" of Bach-playing which has become established during the past thirty or forty years has not kept pace with the discoveries of scholars regarding performance-practice in Bach's own time.

The brilliance and vitality of Fernando Valenti's playing cannot fail to make an immediate impression. Valenti's most striking accomplishment is his ability to maintain a steady, breath-taking pace with an amazing driving force that carries the listener along in spite of himself. It is especially effective in the concerto-like Preludes to Suites Nos. 2, 3, and 5. Upon listening to a complete Suite, however, one becomes aware of a certain sameness; if one's capacity for amazement is limited, one may even end up by being bored. All the movements that contain an element of sprightliness come out very fast and very loud. The slower dances, though they are expertly played, seem to serve chiefly as respites, during which one catches one's breath. The variety that is inherent in the music is often minimized. Valenti, for example, takes no advantage of the opportunities for varied expression that are offered by the French ornaments. One reason why Bach indicated the trills, turns, and mordents by abbreviations rather than writing them out was to allow the performer to make his own choice between various possible interpretations. To play an ornament always the same way, as Valenti does, is like renouncing synonyms, metaphors, and similes in favor of always repeating the same word.

The quality one misses most in Valenti's playing of these suites is flexibility. No one will deny that this musician has a prodigious technique and a complete mastery of his instrument. But he has not yet reached the point where he can take these achievements off the display shelf and put them to work in their true capacity as servants to musical expressions.

—PUTNAM ALDRICH.

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Callas, Tebaldi, Favero

THE old argument as to whether "Lucia" is a soprano's or a tenor's opera seems, on the basis of the present recording (Angel 3503, $11.90/9.90), to be very much concerned with the identity of the soprano and the tenor. When it was Sembrich or Tetrazzini as Lucia, it would be one thing; when it was Campanini, Caruso, or even the fairly recent Galliano Masini, a reconsideration would be in order. In this instance a reconsideration is in order all along the line, for if Giuseppe di Stefano sometimes sings well enough to make the performance his own and Tullio Serafin almost convinces one that "Lucia di Lammermoor" is a conductor's opera, Maria Callas sings a Lucia of such intensity, power, and brilliance as to make one wonder whether it has ever been done quite this way before.

Generally speaking, the difference is on the order of a Supervia or a Simionato in "Il Barbiere" instead of the piping Rosinas we commonly hear. But let it be remembered that Miss Callas is singing the *same* text as the Pons and the Pagliughis, with a mezzo's vibrance in the lower octave, a dramatic soprano's power from middle to top B, and her own rocketlike emission above that. There will doubtless be those who will say that this is no way for a Lucia to sound, but she gives the most interesting performance of the role I have happened to encounter. For one thing, there is something to hear in the lower register, where Donizetti wrote a good deal of music; for another, she commands a variety of vocal colors to make one believe in the Mad Scene—a novel experience for almost all.

At that, Miss Callas is far from a perfect executant: agility comes hard for her in the lower register, and some florid passages on top are skimmed through rather than actually articulated. However, she has fine staccati, a highly reliable sense of pitch, and remarkable accuracy in wide leaps. Together with the dramatic impact she can turn on or off at will, this is a variety of vocal artillery far beyond the small-arms fire of the average Lucia. (In actual vocal terms, she manages a clarinetish sound in the B to B range, with top tones up to E flat that are true, full, and always used with taste.)

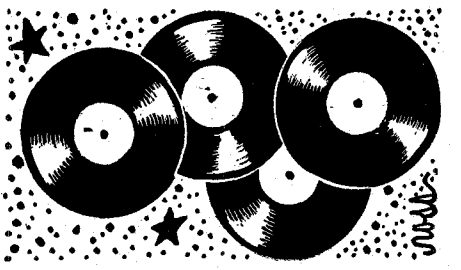
Such vocal feats alone would make for a memorable "Lucia," but Serafin's commanding direction gives unity to a score which can disintegrate into a series of episodes. Di Stefano is in splendid voice throughout, though he hasn't quite the power for "Maledeto, maledeto sia listanto" (the climax of the Contract Scene). Also, a little restraint would have given us a Tomb Scene of believable emotion, rather than merely a weepy one. The associated singers are well-chosen, with Tito Gobbi a fine Ashton, Rafael Arie a sonorous Raimondo, and Anna Maria Canali an effective Alisa. Only Valiano Natali as Arthur Bucklaw strikes one as out of place in this company.

Textually, the edition corresponds to that in common use, with customary deletions from Donizetti's full score and the encrustation of embellishments, cadenzas, passing tones, etc., sanctified by tradition if not good sense. One oddity may be mentioned in Act III, where Raimondo's solo (and the surrounding chorus) is given in E flat rather than the written E major. It is said that this is customary in Italy to prepare for a transposition of the following Mad Scene, which, however, Miss Callas sings as written, in C minor. A big orchestra and chorus are given proper weight in a recording of solidity, excellent balance, and rich sonority.

—I. K.

* * *

ONE thing about "Andrea Chenier" always surprises me: the fact that it is not a hardy perennial at the Metropolitan Opera. It wastes no time getting started, with Gerard's first big scene coming sooner after the curtain rises than "Celeste Aida"—and that's as soon as anything can happen in opera. The roles of Madeleine and Chenier are as juicy as anything in



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Puccini, the story has life and motion, yet it has been away from the Met for twenty-one years.

Of its forty-seven Metropolitan performances, twenty-seven Madeleines were sung by Rosa Ponselle and Florence Easton. Gigli, whose "Improvviso" was the first and finest I ever heard, was followed by Lauri-Volpi, Martinelli, Guilio Crimi, and Salazar, among others. In Chicago, Muzio and Raisa alternated in the soprano lines, in a parade of vocal splendor not unlike that of the seasons in New York when Ponselle and Rethberg divided "La mamma mortas."

In Cetra's new recording (C 1244, $17.85) the soprano who today most nearly recalls the sound and sense of Muzio, Renata Tebaldi, sings one of her greatest recorded performances. Her Madeleine has the same superb passion as her Tosca. Her "Mamma morta" is the finest, most sensitive account on records, standing with Muzio's as a permanent model, and her Act II scene, "Eravate possente," is as excellent. Finally, in the last duet, she is wonderfully thrilling, and blends with tenor Soler's voice in a way that makes it sound its best. Otherwise Soler is only adequate. His high notes are bright without being big, he gives the part little fire except when singing with Tebaldi. Ugo Savarese's Gerard is sound without being menacing, but the part is actually more lyrical, and in this he excels. Arturo Basile leads the Radio Turin Orchestra in a virile reading, with fine support from the entire cast and chorus.

If you want the opera for less money, somewhat less live sound, but a good deal of excitement, Columbia—on two records rather than three, and at their Entré price of $2.98 per disc—has released its old set with Lina Bruna Rasa, Luigi Marini, and the excellent Gerard of Carlo Galeffi. Cavalier Molajoli here leads the Scala chorus and orchestra in a rather rapid version, but the spirit of the music still comes off.

—Paul Hume.

* * *

IN REISSUING, on the Entré label, the complete "Mefistofele" of Boito (EL-9, $10.55) recorded more than twenty years ago by the forces of La Scala under the direction of Lorenzo Molajoli, Columbia has proved that quality of performance still supersedes, in the order of a choice, the achievements of modern engineering. This album is not especially notable for sound; but it achieves an eloquence and a poetry not nearly suggested in the new "Mefistofele" recently issued by Urania.

Maestro Molajoli conducts with authority and a wonderfully flexible, yet never arbitrary, sense of tempo. Orchestra and chorus are first class and the singing of the children's choir in the prologue is unforgettable, particularly in those rapid passages for the cherubim that seem to dart from out of the ether.

Most of the solo parts are of top caliber, especially those of the two women. Mafalda Favero, known to opera-goers of this country for her all too brief appearances at the Metropolitan and San Francisco theatres fifteen years ago, is a radiant Margherita, perhaps a bit too knowing and sensuous, vocally, in the earlier portions of the score, but overwhelming in the death scene. Equally fine is Giannina Arangi-Lombardi, whose singing of Helen of Troy provides, in this album, the ideal standard by which dramatic sopranos of our time might be judged. Antonio Melandri is an effective Faust; and Nazzareno de Angelis, long celebrated in Italy for his Mefistofele, brings authority and resonance to the role, withal an occasional exaggeration. The sound is necessarily dated; but this listener prefers meat to gravy.

—Robert Lawrence.

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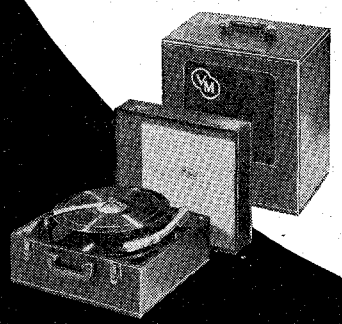

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SPOTLIGHT ON THE MODERNS

A Debt to Hanson—and Koussevitzky

THE arrangement that was made not long ago between Howard Hanson and Mercury, culminating in the American Music Festival Series, enables us all to share the benefits, if the spirit so moves us, of the campaign that for many years now has been carried on in Rochester on behalf of American composers. The series crept up on us rather imperceptibly, with an assortment of works of disappointing stature. But now with its Vols. 4 to 6 (each LP is designated a volume) it has provided us with at least one landmark of the American symphony literature (the Roy Harris Third) and a number of other works that bring prestige and interest to the series, including three by Hanson himself, Cowell's Fourth Symphony, Copland's "Quiet City," and Bernard Rogers's "Soliloquy" for flute and strings.

Hanson prepares his recordings remarkably well, and he and his expert orchestra have developed quite a good sense of American composing styles. As a composer he is, perhaps, our most notable conservative and one who, as we may easily gather from his Fourth Symphony (Mercury 40004, $5.45), is thoroughly grounded in the techniques of the grand nineteenth-century symphonic style. (I prefer this symphony to the earlier and more familiar "Romantic" Symphony, and I find its major weakness is the way it heaps on climaxes near the end to make for an "impressive" close.) As a conductor, fortunately, he is less conservative, and though the Harris Third Symphony is not representative of the most advanced music of our time, it represents a considerably more advanced esthetic than Hanson's own.

I was gratified at the capacity of the Harris work, which is on the reverse side of the Hanson, to hold the attention so well after all the performances it has had, and I was surprised, too, at how concise it sounded. Not that it ever struck the listener in the way that the inflated, hour-long, epic type of symphony does, for it is far from this in length and character. But it used to seem drawn out in a few passages—especially in its first days (around 1939) before the composer made a cut in what some of us delighted in calling the "Waldweben" section. Undoubtedly, our present impression of compactness in this one-movement symphony is due in no small part to Hanson's fluent pacing. In Koussevitzky's reading (on the old 78-rpm version)the eloquent opening, with its evocation of the American hymn and its composer's characteristic "false-relations," was played almost twice as slowly as in the present LP version. Presented in straightforward fashion by Hanson it seems less grand in its aspirations and it succeeds nobly in what it sets out to do—namely, to deploy a certain broad, appealing lyricism.

I do not wish to run down the majestic Koussevitzky manner. Indeed, its absence these days is much to be deplored. If at times he laid the atmosphere on too thickly, at other times it was precisely the way in which he projected an atmosphere that enabled him to put over a new American work. His "Appalachian Spring" which has just been reissued (RCA Victor LCT 1134, $5.72) demonstrates this impressively. Three previous LP's of the Copland ballet score, released in the course of the last two years, made it increasingly imperative that Koussevitzky's old 78-rpm version be reissued, and we are glad that RCA has responded to the call. If we were not always sufficiently thankful to Koussevitzky during his life for his service to American music, these three LP's of "Appalachian Spring" would be enough to render us aware of our debt.

The latest of them is by Franz Litschauer, conducting the Vienna State Opera Orchestra (Vanguard 439, $5.95). As a European conductor, faced with the idiomatic problems of an American work, Litschauer has done better than Rother did on the Urania LP issued a few months ago. But he is handicapped by his orchestra, and it does not speak well of him that he should have allowed the record out with such obvious flaws as the inept oboe and the vulgar trombones in the variations on "The Gift to Be Simple." By more than coincidence, I suspect, RCA Victor has given its competing "Appalachian Spring" the same coupling as the Vanguard version "El Salon Mexico." While Bernstein's "Salon Mexico" (Columbia) compares well with Koussevitzky's, the latter's remains the best of the three. The sound of the Boston Symphony, even as it is

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here transcribed from 78-rpm recordings, is still richer and firmer than that of any of the three European groups which have recorded "Appalachian Spring."

Foreign orchestras do not seem to take to our music readily. Foreign conductors have often presented American works admirably in this country, but usually they have, and quite understandably, been able to lean on the composer at rehearsals. Ideally, it takes our own conductors to do the major promulgating of our own music—conductors with both the interest and, by virtue of their background, the predilection for it. Among them, Hanson is pre-eminent, but before returning to him and his Mercury series, I should like to single out one of the younger men in this class, Izler Solomon, who is responsible for a fine new reading (its first on LP) of Copland's "Music for the Theatre" (MGM E3095, $4.85). Both the reading and the reproduction beautifully preserve the chamber-music quality of this succulent work, which gives a frame of permanence to jazz cliches of the Twenties. It is delightfully coupled with the suite from Kurt Weill's "Dreigroschenoper."

COWELL'S Fourth Symphony, which is the major work of Vol. 6 of the American Festival Series, is one of his most successful and congenial achievements (Mercury LP 40005, $5.45). It contains the evocations of early American music that have become a recognizable trademark of Cowell's style, but never, to my knowledge, has he handled them with more polish. The work is one of the finest examples of the genre that, for want of a better name, we may call "American neo-Gothic."

Riegger's "New Dance" and Hovhaness's Concerto "Arevakal" are coupled with the Cowell. If one is to judge from "New Dance," with its slick orchestration and conga rhythms, Riegger had it in him to map out a popular career for himself comparable to that of Gould. He seems to have chosen the path of austerity instead. I remember this work as being more distinguished in its original version for two pianos and percussion, in which form it was used as dance accompaniment for Humphrey and Weidman. The orchestration is somewhat commercial. As for the Hovhaness, it is more of the same—modal music of Armenian nationalism, which is capable of titillating the listener in very brief movements like the "Estampie" but which palls when carried on for any length of time. All of these works are admirably played under Hanson's baton.

—ARTHUR BERGER.

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Vocal Art from Aksel to Zinka

DESPITE the generous evidence to the contrary, there are still people in the world who have durable standards of artistry in the use of the vocal instrument, and several of them are presently represented with some of the finest recorded examples of their abilities. What is more, they span a generous range of styles, from which all may learn much.

Of prime interest are two discs, one by Zinka Milanov devoted mostly to Verdi ("Suicidio" from Ponchielli's "La Gioconda" and "Voi la sapete" from Mascagni's "Cavalleria" are the interlopers on RCA Victor LM 1777, $5.72), the other mostly by Elisabeth Schwarzkopf devoted wholly to Bach (here the interloper is Hans Hotter, who sings the Cantata No. 82, "Ich habe genug," in a sequence otherwise devoted to Schwarzkopf's performance of the Cantata No. 51, "Jauchzet gott in allen landen," "Sheep may safely graze"—in its original form with two flutes—and "My heart ever faithful" on Columbia ML 4792, $5.95).

One could hardly find vocal literature more diverse in style and scope than this, but it doesn't take too much listening to remind the hearer that what these two artists share are the time-honored requirements of fine singing: voices properly placed, powered with the right kind of breath support, and shaped to expressive ends by a musical intelligence that makes the singer the servant of the music rather than vice versa. This is no more nor less than saying that good prose is the product of an adequate vocabulary properly used—but somehow it is easier to state the formula than to produce the results.

We have been having a good deal of Miss Schwarzkopf recently (both in person and on discs), and the cantata shows her more advantageously than anything, perhaps, other than "The Merry Widow." As her easy management of the high range and florid passages of Bach attest, Miss Schwarzkopf is first and foremost a technician of solid attainments; it is when she is patently "giving thought" as she sings (more so in a disc of Mozart arias ranging from "Batti batti" to "Non mi dir," and from "Dove sono" to "Zeffiretti lusinghiere," on Angel 35021) that one is inclined to quarrel with her interpretative intentions as "calculated" or "studied." In the Mozart she is, to my ear, at her best in the difficulties of the "Idomeneo" excerpt: the simpler, more direct arias tend to fussiness rather than finesse. (The Columbia disc is a mixture of excellent recording in the cantata and older sound in "Sheep may safely graze," once circulated here on 78 rpm; the Angel is excellent throughout. And for those who are curious, Hotter is at his best on his side, though Anthony Bernard's conducting is stolid.)

In the Milanov collection there is not only a reprise of her celebrated abilities in excerpts from "Aida," "Trovatore," and "Cavalleria," which we have had before on discs in one form or another, but also a generous helping from one of her greatest roles, Leonora in "La Forza." RCA has produced it with appropriate consideration, providing a suitably large orchestra as background for "Madre, pietosa Vergine," Lubomir Vichegenov, bass, and a good-sized chorus for the Convent Scene. Let others tell the glories of her high notes: I note the low C sharp in "Suicidio" as something I didn't know she had in her voice.

As a memorial tribute, Elisabeth Schumann's disc (RCA Victor LCT 1126, $5.72) is a well-chosen mixture of the best known examples of her art ("Das Lied im Grünen," "Hark, Hark the Lark," "Die Forelle," and "Heidenröslein" of Schubert) with a version of "Frauenliebe und Leben" which is less familiar. The latter makes for an absorbing comparison with the recent one of Flagstad, who is, incidentally,

Schwarzkopf—"solid attainments."

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a double Schumann admirer—Elisabeth as well as Robert. Here the effects are attained by a blend of note and word subtler than Flagstad's, though not so inherently rich, in the nature of the vocal equipment she possessed. Gerald Moore's accompaniments are splendid as far as they go. Would that they went through the "Ave Maria" at the end, instead of the sickly string ensemble that is heard!

FINALLY, and with becoming modesty, we present a disc brought into existence by the suggestion of an *SR* reader, Edward Hill, who proposed a pairing of the Aksel Schiøtz-Gerald Moore version of Schumann's "Dichterliebe" with the Charles Panzéra-Alfred Cortot one. I know of no precedent for this idea of two classic versions of the same lengthy work on a single LP, and we welcome RCA Victor LCT 1132, at the usual $5.72, as the first in what we hope will be a substantial literature of "Comparative Classics."

The consequences are almost as provocative as the idea itself. Memory had painted the Panzéra-Cortot presentation as notable for its time, but rather outmoded by the more recent effort of Schiøtz-Moore. Well, the latter remains mighty fine, but honors for a rarified kind of collaboration in which the understanding seems to be intuitive rather than preconceived must be awarded the Frenchmen. I dare say there will be those who will take issue with this order of values, which is a good thing; on such a level of execution personal predilection must necessarily have a determining influence. It may be, merely, that a good baritone will always appeal more, to some, than a good tenor.

My thought is that whatever order one chooses to hear them initially, on the second or third time around listen to the Schiøtz first. Under these circumstances it is hard to imagine more sensitive attention to word values, a richer or more mature conception of the poetic qualities in the music. But a subsequent attention to the Panzéra will, I think, show a singer in the full mastery of his abilities (compared with one just approaching that condition) to whom vocal expression is as effortless as breathing. And with all respect for Moore, Cortot at his best provides an artistic impulse not equaled by his opposite number. In all, this disc is a source of illumination and satisfaction that makes a living thing of the interpreter's art. There is, incidentally, very little to choose between the sound on the two sides: the RCA technicians have done wonders with the Panzéra-Cortot and the Schiøtz-Moore always was good.

—I. K.

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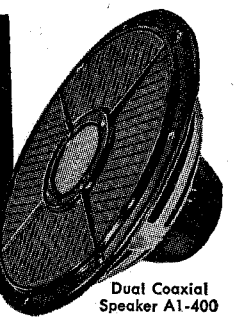

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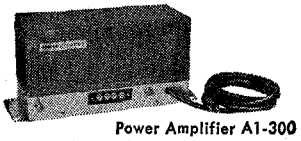

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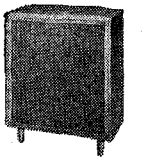

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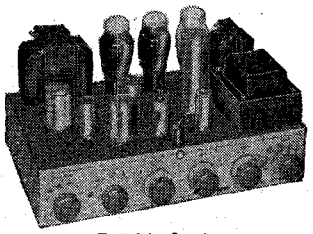

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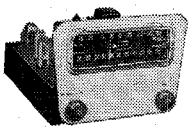

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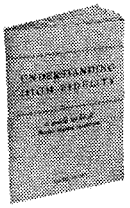

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THE OTHER SIDE

(IMPORTED RECORDINGS)

LONDON.

THE simultaneous announcement of three "Lohengrin" recordings has been generally regarded as a huge joke, but most reviewers must have felt slightly weak at the knees at the prospect of wading through twenty-eight LP sides of music mainly in slowish common time, punctuated by countless C major fanfares. I have now done my duty and listened to Nixa's Munich "Lohengrin" (already familiar to *SR* readers on Urania), to HMV's studio recording from Hamburg, and to Decca's synthesis of last summer's Bayreuth Festival performances. Synthesis, in this context, denotes a recording which sounds anything but synthetic; Decca's "Lohengrin" is not only the best all-round performance, but also a far more exciting aural experience than its rivals are able to provide. "Lohengrin," unlike "Parsifal," is a work demanding a great deal of movement on the stage and there are times when the balance is not ideal, but this (plus the occasional signs of life from the audience) is surely a small price to pay for the sense of perspective and the feeling of "live" drama so richly furnished by these five discs.

Wolfgang Windgassen, though not the possessor of a notably attractive voice, is an intelligent and dignified Lohengrin, more convincing than HMV's Rudolf Schock or Nixa's George Vincent. Eleanor Steber, making her Bayreuth debut as Elsa, is immeasurably superior to Maud Cunitz and Marianne Schech, her wobbly German rivals. Margarete Klose serves both HMV and Nixa as Ortrud; in her best days she might have been more than a match for Decca's Astrid Varnay, but nowadays she has difficulties with her upper register and, in addition, Varnay's characterization is subtler by far. As Telramund, Nixa's Boehm is no match for Josef Metternich (HMV) or Hermann Uhde (Decca), both of whom are excellent, with Uhde giving the more dramatic account of the part. Not one of the King's protagonists is in the great tradition; Frick (HMV) has a fine voice but does not always use it to best advantage, while Bayreuth's Greindl sounds rather plebeian.

Of the three conductors I like Nixa's Kempe best. Decca's Keilberth is competent, but we might have expected more distinguished musical direction from Bayreuth. Some of the orchestral playing is a little ragged, but there is also a great deal of wonderful sound, and the chorus is superb. HMV's Schuechter, too, is competent enough but his performance as a whole is too studio-bound. By cutting almost the whole passage between the "Narration" and "Farewell" in the last act, HMV managed to squeeze this act onto two sides and the whole opera occupies four discs. Nixa and Decca take five records each; the former omits a part of the passage cut by HMV; Decca is, of course, complete.

When we examine the contributions of the various companies as such, it is really astonishing how much of it all emanates from Decca's factories. From there come not only all our Decca, Capitol, Brunswick, Telefunken, and Oiseau-Lyre releases, but also the vast bulk of "London" pressings for the American market. Decca's own contributions for December include a splendid pair of Beethoven recordings —Symphonies Five and Six—by the Concertgebouw Orchestra under Kleiber. The C minor has brought forth such a chorus of unanimous praise as is rarely accorded to a disc; the "Pastoral," save for a slightly mannered slow movement, is on the same level of excellence. Another Amsterdam recording affords us the opportunity of hearing this great orchestra in music

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by native composers. Directed by Van Beinum, they play the interesting but somewhat overscored one-movement Symphony No. 3 by Willem Pijper, coupled with some gentle and attractively "underscored" music by Alphons Diepenbrock, a composer belonging to the generation before Pijper.

From Vienna there are two Brahms performances: a dreadfully wayward and slovenly Symphony No. 2, for which Carl Schuricht must take the blame, and a competent, but hardly necessary, D minor Concerto in which Backhaus and Böhm do not reach the fine standard recently attained for the same company by Curzon and Van Beinum. The Vienna Octet either possesses some remarkably "ambidextrous" members or else has a decidedly floating population. How else can it give us wind-*cum*-string compositions such as Schubert's Octet and the Beethoven and Kreutzer Septets, yet now suddenly appear as an all-string group in Mendelssohn's delightful Octet? This is a splendid performance, excellently recorded.

LIGHTER fare is provided by Paris and its Conservatoire Orchestra. Under Désormière they give us a sparkling recording of Ibert's frothy "Divertissement" (coupled rather oddly with "Les Sylphides"), while Edouard Lindenberg conducts stylish performances of Bizet's "Jeux d'Enfants" and "La jolie fille de Perth" Suites as well as Chabrier's delicious "Suite Pastorale." Scandinavian rusticity, too, can be treated with stylish distinction, as is demonstrated by the Danish Radio Orchestra in Grieg's "Lyric Suite" (conducted by Tuxen) and in Emil Reesen's "Himmerland" (conducted by the composer).

Ever since her untimely death last autumn, Kathleen Ferrier's records have been in tremendous demand. Since she does not appear to have left behind any as yet unpublished recordings, Decca has been busy transferring many of her 78-rpm titles onto microgroove. One twelve-inch LP couples Brahms's "Alto Rhapsody" with four Brahms songs (including the two with viola obbligato). The recording of the "Rhapsody" (conducted by Krauss) was made about six years ago, a time when Ferrier was beginning to establish an international reputation, but had not yet come under the influence of Bruno Walter. This performance, though it contains some lovely singing, reminds us how miraculously this artist matured during the last five years of her tragically brief career. Would that she might have re-recorded the "Rhapsody" with Dr. Walter at the time when they gave us the memorable "Lied von der Erde"!

—THOMAS HEINITZ.

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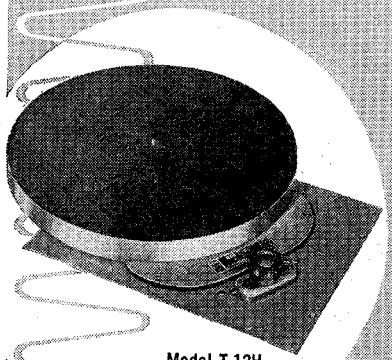

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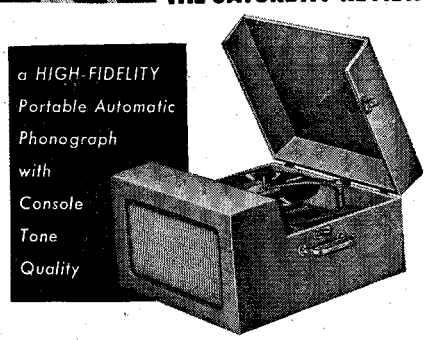

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Soviet Music

Continued from page 39

prevalent opinions of important people." In Soviet criticism this word appears quite often.

Khachaturian then reports the fact well-known not only to Soviet composers but to any reader of the Soviet press, namely that mediocre musicians have secured important positions for themselves and had their works performed by the simple stratagem of writing music on patriotic Soviet themes:

> How many times have we heard "monumental" works requiring a huge body of performers and presenting a grandiloquent musical vacuum, with an important "realistic" theme expressed in the programmatic subtitle! How often were we willing to overlook the obvious faults of such a work only because it was marked on the jacket with a great stirring theme of the love for the motherland, struggle for peace, and friendship among the nations!

Zhdanov called Soviet composers back to the Russian classics; Khachaturian reminds that the classics themselves were the modernists of their time:

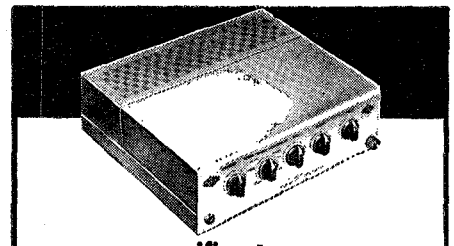
> Bach, Beethoven, Glinka, Mussorgsky, Tchaikovsky—they all were innovators in art. They blazed new trails in the service of the people, responding to the demands of living reality, obedient to lofty inspiration.

Such is the thesis of Khachaturian's article. Good dialectician as he is, he follows his exposition by an antithesis:

> Some musical personalities misunderstand the nature of innovation, so important in the development of progressive art. They confuse innovation with the chase after "original novelty" peculiar to the creative straining of foreign composers-formalists. Such "innovation" is profoundly repugnant to us, and we are prepared to fight such formalistic music-making with unrelenting energy.

By way of digression, Khachaturian takes up a vigorous defense of Prokofiev and Shostakovich as true Soviet artists and genuine innovators:

> The significant works by Prokofiev and Shostakovich reflect with great artistic power the images of our intense reality saturated with revolutionary energy. I here refer not only to the thematic content of individual works,



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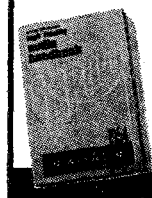

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not only to programmatic descriptions of the stirring pages of our history and events of our time, but to the very sense of the rhythm of contemporary life, the "tuning" of the spiritual world of Soviet Man. . . . I feel the pulse of our revolutionary reality even in such works as Prokofiev's cantata "Alexander Nevsky," which goes back to the remote past of the Russian people. . . . Service to his people, service to progressive humanity, these were the guiding principles of Prokofiev, Soviet composer-patriot, in the best works of the last two decades of his life.

Khachaturian ends his eulogy of Prokofiev with an appeal to young composers to emulate Prokofiev in the uncompromising and bold pursuit of his ideals. He draws an unflattering parallel with some new Soviet composers, the "adaptationists," devoid of creative daring such as Prokofiev had:

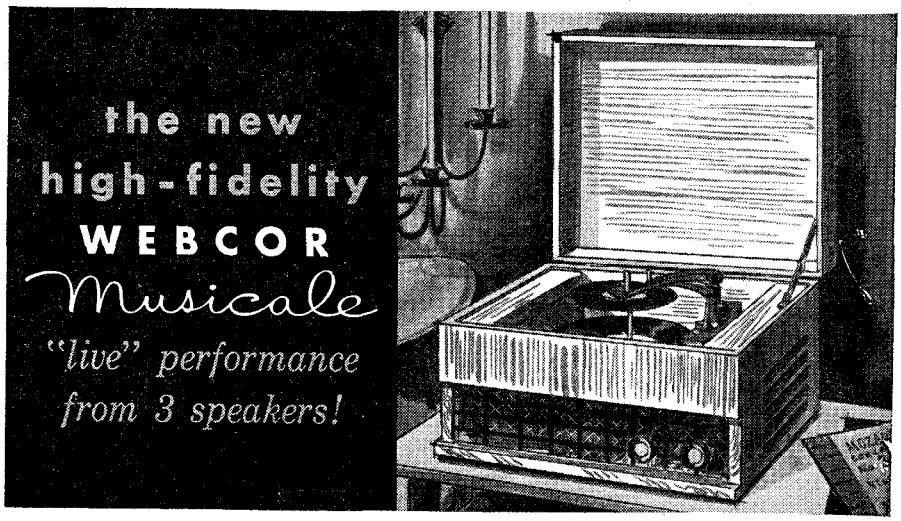
> One cannot produce a work of revolutionary romanticism, inspired by an ardent love for the motherland, and for the people of our Socialist reality without creative élan, with a cautious glance over the shoulder just to make sure that nothing untoward would happen. There are works produced here in which everything seems to be all right on the surface; the program is fine, the themes are national in character, the harmony is well arranged, the orchestration is competent, and yet the artistic result is almost nil, for the music is devoid of creative boldness and inspiration.

The climactic part of Khachaturian's long disquisition comes with a direct accusation against the bungling musical bureaus and an appeal for liberation:

> It seems to me that the time has come to re-examine the established system of institutional guardianship over our composers. I will say more: we must resolutely abandon the vicious practice of interfering with the composer's creative process on the part of members of our musical bureaus. A creative problem cannot be solved by administrative and bureaucratic methods. . . . Trust the artist more, and he will approach the creative problems of our life with greater freedom and greater sense of responsibility.

Khachaturian gives us a glimpse of what is actually happening in the bureaucratic musical institutions in Moscow and elsewhere in Soviet Russia:

> Under the existing system of "guardianship" the composer is



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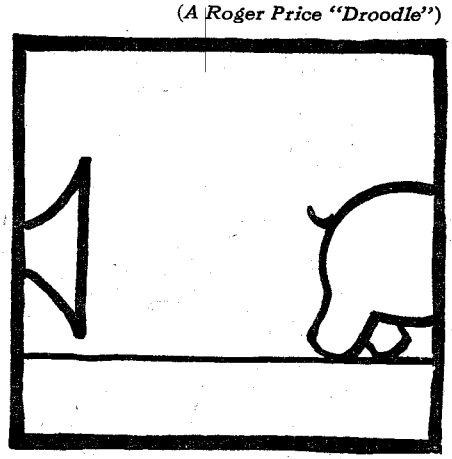

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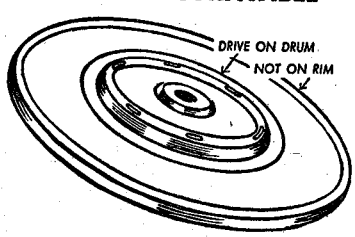

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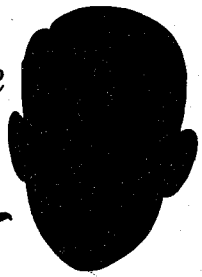

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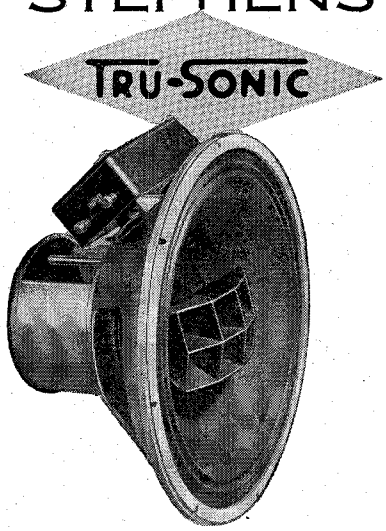

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relieved of all responsibility. When he brings a song to a musical organization, every functionary deems it his duty to offer "advice," to suggest an "improvement" in melody or in rhythm, or to correct his harmony. In short, he receives "guiding directives" for a complete refitting of his song.

Strange as it may seem, there are composers who agree to all these alterations. They surrender their most cherished ideas, over which they worked so painfully, and dress up their creation like a hairdresser's dummy.

Then Khachaturian repeats his appeal:

> There is no need of guardianship! Let us take a risk and entrust the writing of operas and other musical works to our best composers. . . . Our musical institutions must cease their petty surveillance. . . . The Union of Soviet Composers has no right to assume the function of an infallible appraiser in the service of our musical bureaus. Within the Union of Composers, discussion of new works should be in the nature of free exchange of opinions. . . . I can even imagine that some works rejected by the Union of Composers should none the less be published and performed. Life itself will correct the original evaluation should it prove erroneous or biased.

There is something in Khachaturian's article reminiscent of April 1932, when Soviet composers rebelled against the Association of Proletarian Musicians, which had held unofficial power for several years. At that time the Soviet Government simply disbanded the self-styled proletarian group, and the Soviet composers were given their freedom to compose as they pleased, and not only in marchtime, as the proletarian musicians wanted them to do. The pendulum swung once more in 1936 when Shostakovich was assailed in a famous article in *Pravda*. Three years later Shostakovich was returned to the fold. But the *Pravda* article was recalled by Zhdanov in the 1948 decree and confirmed as a correct expression of musical policy.

From this recurrence of attacks a theory of cycles may be evolved. The controls over the Soviet musical mind seem about to fall. Then the composers will once more write as they please. For how long? The theory of cycles would give the period of grace of about four years. Or else the reactionary forces in Soviet esthetics may finally give up the fight and allow Russian musical art to flourish unhampered.

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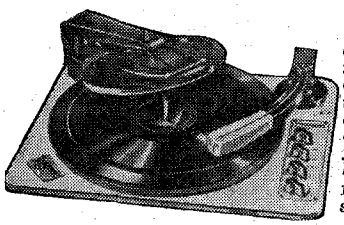

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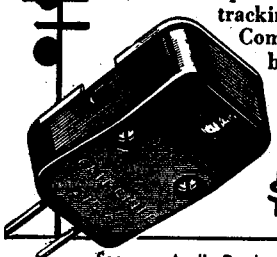

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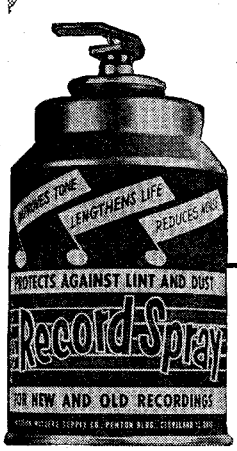

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Pop Roundup

IN THIS day of sobbing, shouting, and appoggiatura singing, two new long-players offer monumental relief. One is NAT "KING" COLE SINGS FOR TWO IN LOVE (Capitol H 420), and the other is IT'S BEEN SO LONG, with Helen Ward (Columbia CL 6271). Each vocalist, in an individual manner, radiates warmth and unaffected charm. And underlying each performance, ballad, or up-tune, is an unforced jazz pulse. Cole, of course, was a top jazz pianist long before he successfully essayed intimate balladry. Miss Ward was Benny Goodman's first and best girl singer. Her retirement from his band in 1937 or thereabouts was broken only for the short-lived tour of last spring, but it's pleasant to report that she never sang better or sounded fresher than she does in this new offering.

The real novelty of the season, I believe, is an item labeled IMPRESSIONS OF OUTER SPACE, by Larry Elgart and his Ensemble (Brunswick BL 58054). Included are eight selections having such intriguing titles as "Lunar Sleep," "Primordial Matter," "Space Intoxication," etc. I suspect that this whole business of titles out of science-fiction is a device to attract attention to some relatively abstract modern music that otherwise defies classification. The Elgart Ensemble has jazz instrumentation; five saxes, trombone, bass, piano, and percussion. In the various short pieces, written mostly by Lee Pockriss and Charles Albertine, are rhythms and phrases that stem directly from modern jazz. The adroitly handled counterpoint and the provocative harmonies are quite "legitimate" however. Mr. Elgart, who directs the ensemble, is a remarkably expressive alto saxophonist and his ensemble is meticulous. The music never takes itself too seriously—and the annotator, science-fiction author Samuel Mines, goes along nicely with the spirit of the occasion.

One of the more promising new pianists is WYNTON KELLY, whose piano "impressions" are heard in Blue Note BLP 5025. This twenty-two-year-old artist is now in the Army, so this sample of his work will have to do for a while. And it does quite well. Kelly has found enough good ballads to make up an unhackneyed program, and he plays them warmly. On the bright "I've Found a New Baby" he displays a fast right hand in the Tatum-to-Peterson direction. Other tunes here are "Moonlight in Vermont" and "There'll Never Be Another You."

—BILL SIMON.

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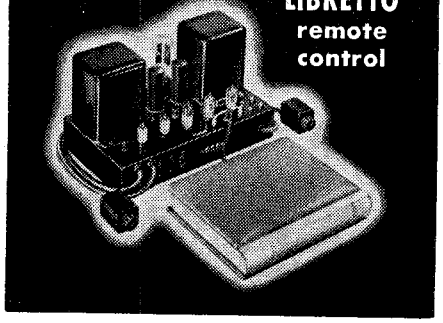

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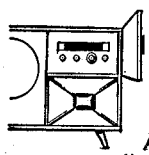

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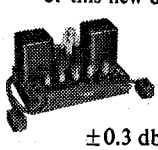

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Letters to the *RECORDINGS* Editor

STOKOWSKI'S CAMDENS

I GOT THE GREATEST kick out of Roland Gelatt's article "An Old Idea on a New Label" [*SR* Dec. 26]. I bought two of the Camdens and they were great. I have often tried to get some of the old Stokowski recordings with the magnificent Philadelphia Orchestra of old, but without success until the Camdens came along. . . . Stokowski is my favorite. Of course, I know he's not a musician's musician, but he plays the way I like it (effectively, theatrically).

EDWARD M. JOHNSON.

Hartford, Conn.

"MISINTERPRETATIONS" BY LANDOWSKA

I FEEL I MUST take exception to the overworshipful and unjustified praise which *SR* reviewers usually lavish on the misinterpretations of Wanda Landowska. With all respect for this performer's technique, I find her playing of Bach thumping, arrogant, misunderstood, and all in all a rather obvious revelation of the interpreter's heartless self-esteem, which is veiled in public by a theatrical show of humble modesty. Compare her overbearing rattling to the wonderfully musical and honest playing of Fischer, Kirkpatrick, *et al.*

ANONYMOUS.

New York, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *In a postscript the author writes: "I, being a performer myself, would prefer to remain anonymous." This request was easy to agree to—since the letter bore no signature at all.*

"HOME BOOK"—REVISED EDITION

C. G. BURKE'S ARTICLE "New Trends in Audio" [*SR* Dec. 26] gives the impression that the writing of the new revised edition of "The Saturday Review Home Book of Recorded Music and Sound Reproduction" is now completed. However, the writer fails to say when the new edition will be published.

N. D. WHITE.

Brookline, Mass.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Publication may be expected in April.*

PONSELLE—1953 VINTAGE

SR ADMIRERS OF ROSA PONSELLE who want to hear the great soprano as she sings today may order a recording made during the last week of 1953. It has Ponselle singing Schubert's "Ave Maria" and, with her sister Carmela, "Silent Night" and "Panis Angelicus." Alone, Carmela is heard singing the Bizet "Agnus Dei." And the record includes carols by members of the Baltimore Civic Opera. Ponselle had the record made as a part of her contribution to the sustaining fund of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. Price: $10, all of which goes to the orchestra, unless the decision is made to split it partly with the Civic Opera. Mail orders to Rosa Ponselle, Villa Pace, Stevenson, Md.

PAUL HUME.

Washington, D.C.

ALL-STAR "AÏDA"

I AGREE WITH THE LETTER by John B. Fisher [*SR* Dec. 26] suggesting that RCA Victor give us a new "Aïda" recording with Milanov, Bjoerling, Warren, and Orthophonic Sound.

LEONARD FREEMAN.

Philadelphia, Pa.

HOROWITZ FOR POSTERITY

MR. KOLODIN'S characteristically illuminating article about "The Veritable Horowitz" [*SR* Dec. 26] leaves out one important consideration, I think. The primary purpose of the recording is, surely, to place on record exactly what an audience thought of the artist; and the applause is actually an integral part of an historical document.

What the disc gives us is an EVENT—naked and unadorned—and we should be grateful for it apart altogether from interpretative considerations. What would we not give for a recording of a Liszt or Paganini recital? And how we should miss the applause were it omitted!

It is to be hoped that the major recording companies will do for other outstanding artists of the day what RCA Victor has done for Horowitz, and posterity.

F. L. FLIGHT.

San Diego, Calif.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Obviously, the record could not include all the applause all the time. The question is: Who decides how much and at what volume level?*

COLUMN ON ACOUSTICS

WITH A MEDIUM-LARGE record collection, split more or less evenly between "modern" and acoustic discs, I heartily second reader Ahles's suggestion [*SR* Dec. 26] that some space be given to memorable artists of the past. Mr. Foster, whose article appears in the same issue, has been doing a noble job in reviving voices of the "Golden Age" for those of us who were not fortunate enough to hear them in person, and a column devoted to an accurate appraisal of their talents would make for valuable reading.

LILLIAN KENT.

San Francisco, Calif.

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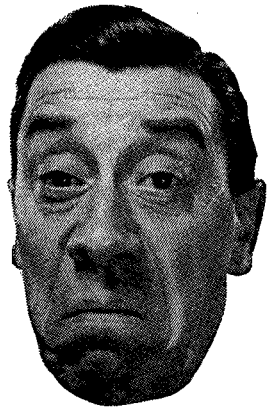

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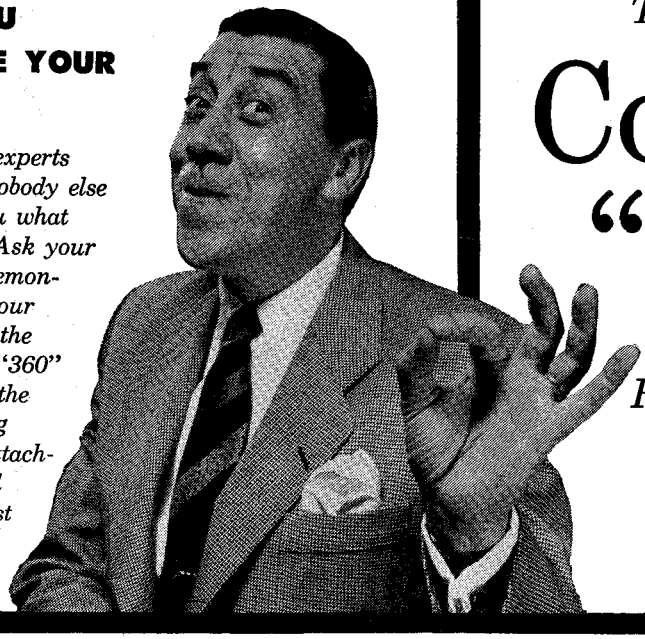

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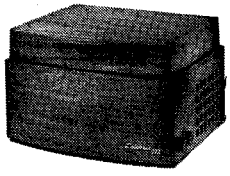

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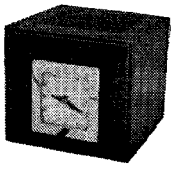

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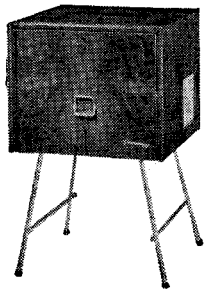

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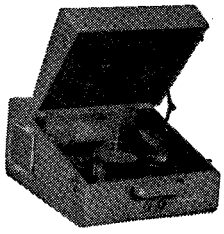

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